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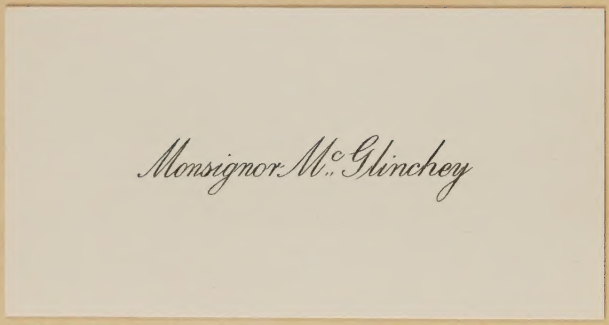
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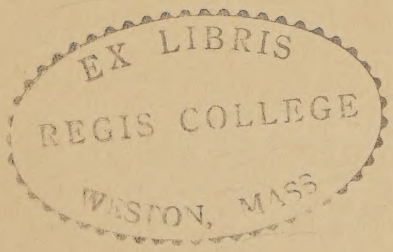

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A Biography

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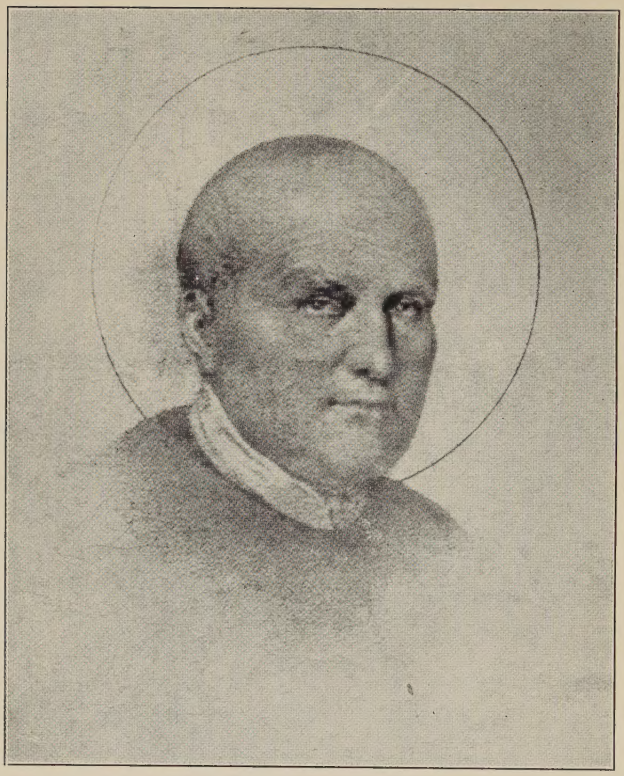

ST. CLEMENT MARIA HOFBAUER

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A Biography

BY

REV. JOHN HOFER, C.SS.R.

TRANSLATED FROM THE THIRD GERMAN EDITION

BY

REV. JOHN B. HAAS, C.SS.R.

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TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

FORTY YEARS have elapsed since the first *Life of Clement Maria Hofbauer* appeared in English. It was a translation by Lady Herbert of a *Life* written in German by Reverend Michael Haringer, C. SS. R., the Postulator of the cause of Beatification. Haringer's life was an enlargement of a previous monograph by the same author, and was compiled from the testimony of the witnesses in the Process, and the few other authentic sources then available. After the Beatification and subsequent Canonization of the Venerable Servant of God, other sources of information were unearthed, adding much to our knowledge of the life and times of the new Saint. In consequence many new and more comprehensive biographies of St. Clement have appeared in the interval in the continental languages. Austria, as was only meet in the circumstances, has taken the first place in the production of these masterpieces of biography. Innerkofler, in his *Clement Maria Hofbauer, a Catholic Reformer,* has given the German literary world a monumental work. Bauchinger has given us what we may call an anecdotal Life of the Saint in that popular style of which he was a master, but which defies translation into our phlegmatic English tongue. It remained for another, however, to give us the last word in the story of the Patron Saint of Vienna in a work that has been lauded by competent critics as an imperishable monument to the humble Redemptorist, the *propagator insignis* of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer beyond the Alps. This latest biography is from the pen of a disciple of the illustrious historian Ludwig Pastor, the Reverend John Hofer, C. SS. R. Writing in the spirit of his master, Hofer has given us what might perhaps be called a History, rather than a Life, so far does he depart from the usual method of the hagiographer. With the unflinching straightforwardness of truth he portrays the man, his times, and his contemporaries. His work has gained for

him the congratulation of his former Professor, has met with general applause in Europe, and it has already been translated into several European languages.

The first edition of Hofer's work was published by Herder & Co., in Freiburg im Breisgau, in 1921. A second and third edition followed in quick succession. The *Life* herewith presented to English readers is a translation of the third edition, which appeared in 1923.

The translator undertook this work at the invitation of the Very Reverend Fidelis Speidel, C. SS. R., Consultor of the Superior General of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer in Rome, and at the request of the Very Reverend James Barron, C. SS. R., Provincial of the Baltimore Province of the Redemptorists in the United States. To them, therefore, he respectfully dedicates these pages.

He, moreover, extends sincere thanks to his Reverend Confrères, Thomas W. Mullaney and Henry Sandkuehler, for their assistance in the work of revision.

May these pages help to give the reader some idea of the great Saint they portray, and teach us all their lesson of faithfulness to duty, life-long zeal and devotion for the salvation of souls, springing from a pure heart, whose motive in everything was the honor and glory of God.

Feast of Our Lady of Good Counsel,
April 26, 1926

THE AUTHOR'S PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION

COMPARED with the first edition, the greater number of the chapters in this new edition contain extensive valuable additions. These are derived for the most part from the Archives of Warsaw, which only recently have been made available for this purpose. The condition and fate of St. Benno's during the period of the Prussian dominion over Warsaw, 1796–1806, are now more clearly known, and appear in a light far more unfavorable than was described in the first edition. I felt myself obliged to incorporate some of these acts in the present edition, because they admirably illustrate not only the personality of the Saint, but likewise the entire situation. The Archives of Chur and two private archives have also furnished new material. That of the family von Klinkowstroem, in Vienna, contains among other interesting things, the autograph notes of Frederick von Klinkowstroem (died in 1834) on Hofbauer, and a letter of Klinkowstroem's to Pilat, which throws a very sharp light upon the personality of Adam Mueller. From the papers of Philip Veit, now in the possession of Hubert von Lassaulx, in Cologne, I have copied for the most part the letter of Frederick Schlegel's to Dorothy, written three days after Hofbauer's death. This letter, better than all anecdotes, lets us see what Hofbauer was to the prince of the Romanticists.

I hereby give expression of my sincerest thanks to the Klinkowstroem family, Hubert von Lassaulx, and particularly to my Confrère, Father Ladislaus Szoldrski, who has most willingly placed at my disposal the material which he had gathered from the Warsaw and Chur Archives.

The size of the work has not been enlarged on account of these additions. In the text itself very little has been affected; but in the citation of authorities I have been compelled to impose greater restriction upon myself here than in the first edi-

tion. Above all, the critical reasons for my disagreement with former biographies of Hofbauer could be omitted without serious detriment to the work. In this way the room required for the new material has been gained. In the Preface to the first edition I have already written concerning the widely scattered sources from which the material for this *Life* has been gathered.

May this new edition serve to make the German peoples better acquainted with the life and works, the sufferings and the struggles of one of their noblest sons!

KATZELSDORF — WIENER NEUSTADT,
January, 1923

THE AUTHOR'S PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

IN the August, 1820, number of *The Oelzweige,* a periodical published in Vienna, there appeared a poem from the pen of the illustrious Frederick Zachary Werner in which that writer reproduced the life of his recently deceased friend and master, John Clement Maria Hofbauer. The editor of the publication appended to the poem the following note: "Although this poem seems to require some historical annotations, these are intentionally omitted here in order to afford one or the other of the intimate friends and admirers of Father Hofbauer an opportunity to present to thinking readers a complete Life of this great and estimable man who peacefully departed this life on March 15, 1820, in the sixty-ninth year of his age. A biography of this admirable man, whose eventful and truly wonderful life was replete with divine influences and ceaseless activity in the cause of right and virtue, would be a true picture of what a highly gifted soul, such as is not frequently met with, may accomplish when submissive to the direction of its divine Master."

It was a long time before this invitation was heeded. More than half a century was to elapse before the first somewhat satisfactory biography of the Saint appeared. As early as 1830, ten years after the death of Hofbauer, one of his disciples began to collect personal reminiscences of him. But beyond this preparatory work nothing more was done. Why, we cannot ascertain. All that could be obtained in the way of biographical material at that time by means of interviews and intimate inquiries among the friends and disciples of the Saint, offered nothing new to the admirers of their departed master. For the earlier periods of his life even the most fundamental information was entirely lacking. Those witnesses in the Process of Beatification who had been in almost

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daily contact with him, could not tell even the place of his birth. Hofbauer, it is true, found pleasure in relating episodes of his life in conversation. But these communications he would weave into his talks as if by accident, as examples in his instructions. He hardly ever wrote anything about himself, either of the external vicissitudes of his career, or of his interior life. So, too, there was little to be gleaned from the correspondence which he left. Being under the suspicion of the police of Vienna in the last years of his life, he was accustomed to destroy all the letters that he received as soon as he had read them. After his death, therefore, his disciples may probably have regretted that they had neglected to inquire into these matters by questioning him during life. With most of them, however, it may have happened as it did to his best beloved disciple, Dr. Madlener, who in the Process excused his utter ignorance of the earlier life of the Saint as follows: "I must acknowledge that I was so taken up and contented with the personality of Father Hofbauer, that I had no desire whatever to ask him any questions with regard to the circumstances of his past life." The biographer must bewail this, unless, indeed, he recognize that herein precisely lay the best characterization of this man, who, himself entirely absorbed in and dominated by the supernatural, knew so well how to infuse imperceptibly into the minds of his greatest and most sincere admirers his own indifference toward all the purely natural incidents and accidents of life. Or, let us rather say: Hofbauer was an extraordinary apparition; so long as he appeared, all eyes were held, fascinated, by his charm; only when he was withdrawn, was there any time for afterthought.

The first biographies of Hofbauer, which were compiled from the oral communications of individual contemporaries, are three in number. They are: the little work by Dr. Frederick Poesl, C. SS. R., *Clement Maria Hofbauer, the First German Redemptorist* (Regensburg, 1844); the much-read work of Sebastian Brunner, *Clement Maria Hofbauer and His Time* (Vienna, 1858); and a work written in Rome, in 1856, by a German Redemptorist, and published, in 1864, in Vienna, enlarged with some additions by Father Haringer, C. SS. R., *Life of the Servant of God, Father Clement Maria Hof-*

bauer. These give us indeed a fairly good picture of the man in general; but as biographies they are rather meager sketches, from which the great outlines of his life and activity cannot be gathered.

The fears entertained, therefore, at the beginning of the Process of Beatification can be easily understood. It was seriously doubted whether any attempt to accumulate the necessary biographical material for the examination would be successful. But these fears and doubts were soon found to be groundless. Now that the Church had issued the call, sources of information began to flow in abundance. No less than thirty witnesses who had personally known the Servant of God and had conversed with him could be presented to the Commission. Information on the earlier years of his life was likewise forthcoming. The Process, in consequence, advanced with remarkable rapidity. The Bavarian Redemptorist, Rev. Michael Haringer, who had labored untiringly for its success, now undertook to arrange all this new material into a Life of the Saint. His *Life of the Venerable Servant of God, Clement Maria Hofbauer,* which appeared in Vienna in 1877, is the first complete biography of the Saint, and was constructed principally from the *Summarium,* the testimony of the witnesses, printed in 1871. In its pages once again Clement Maria Hofbauer wandered over the face of the earth, exercising the same irresistible attraction that he manifested in the days of his pilgrimage in the flesh. In spite of its simple external appearance, Haringer's *Life* achieved an enviable success. Men who for years had lived estranged from the Church were brought back to the confessional by reading it. In 1880, Haringer produced a second edition, which contained some new, though not very important, additions. The personal testimonies of these witnesses at the Process of Beatification, which Haringer cast into biographic form, constitute the basis of all the subsequent Lives of Hofbauer, who in a short time became a favorite among Catholic peoples. No small share in making the Saint known generally among the faithful was contributed by the popular *Life of Clement Maria Hofbauer* by Father Matthias Bauchinger, published in 1888, immediately after the Beatification, which became

in very truth a household treasure. Despite its bulk, this *Life* has gone through many editions.

But contemporary documentary material played a very insignificant part in the Haringer biography. Indeed, who would have suspected at the time that a veritable phalanx of Archives of the ecclesiastical and civil Commissariates in Vienna, Znaim, Bruenn, Cracow, Warsaw, Dresden, Munich, Freiburg im Breisgau, Friburg in Switzerland, Rome, and even Paris, contained hidden away abundant and in part valuable material for the *Life* of a man who had never played a rôle in the great world, who began life as a baker's apprentice, and departed from this world as the simple Spiritual Director of an insignificant convent of nuns! It was largely accident that opened these new sources of information.

It was only about the time of the Canonization of the Saint, in 1909, that this thorough search of widely scattered archives was begun. The Dutch Redemptorist, Father Oomen, examined the Archives of the Propaganda in Rome for the correspondence of the former Nuncios at Warsaw. The results of this investigation were published, in 1909, by Father Adolph Innerkofler in a work entitled, *Clement M. Hofbauer, an Austrian Reformer.* In this work, too, was given to the public for the first time the correspondence preserved in the Archives of the Father General of the Redemptorists at Rome. A still larger number of letters and acts could Innerkofler present in his second edition, in 1913. Not to mention lesser sources, the Archives of three Ministries in Vienna and the Archiepiscopal Archives of the same city furnished very bountiful additions; some came from the Nunciature of Vienna, while a considerable volume of the acts from the Archiepiscopal Archives of Freiburg im Breisgau contributed information regarding the troubles with Wessenberg. Further new material, finally, taken from various Archives, was placed at his disposal by Father Collet, C. SS. R., of Friburg in Switzerland. But Innerkofler recoiled before the task of arranging all this new material. He adhered to the story and the dates of the older Hofbauer biographies even in those cases in which the new sources authentically pointed to the opposite course. His splendid work is, properly speaking, a combina-

tion of biography and the publication of sources of information. In this latter aspect it will continue to be of great value: a series of interesting acts of contemporaneous history is here published in complete form.

The latest *Life of Hofbauer,* by Dr. John Eckardt, appeared in 1916. This charmingly written, easy-flowing little book, which, by the way, ignores the second edition of Innerkofler, contains nothing new except a letter, a very interesting one, be it said, of Dorothy Schlegel's (p. 52).

Since the appearance of Innerkofler's work, further researches in Archives have brought more material to light. After Father Lubienski, C. SS. R., had examined the Archives at Warsaw for the publication of his Polish *Life of Hofbauer,* Father Szoldrski, C. SS. R., undertook to collect systematically sources bearing on the period of the Saint's sojourn at Warsaw, and these sources will be published in the *Monumenta Hofbaueriana.* The first number of this publication (Cracow, 1915) contains besides *Miscellanea* from the Archives of Bruenn and Cracow, material for some incidents of the journeys of Hofbauer in 1795, 1797 and 1798, which are quite wonderful. Among the State papers in the Bavarian Archives at Munich was found the confiscated correspondence of the Saint during the years 1806 and 1807, as well as valuable acts referring to the expulsion of the Redemptorists from Bavaria and the Canton of Grisons. Finally, a short time before the outbreak of the World War, a bundle of acts was discovered in the National Archives at Paris, which turned out to be the correspondence from the Domestic Archives of St. Benno's in Warsaw. This had been confiscated by Marshal Davoust in 1808. Davoust sent a French translation of all these letters and papers to Napoleon, who ordered a Report to be made to him by the Archbishop of Mechlin, de Pradt. The value of this discovery is diminished to some extent, it is true, by the fact that the translators employed by Davoust were not always altogether competent, not being sufficiently acquainted with the languages of the originals (Latin, Polish and German). Nor were they much better informed in ecclesiastical matters, and thus many faults in translation arose. It causes one to smile, for example, to read

that the cleric Martin Stark received four *orphans* from the Nuncio at Vienna, when one realizes that it is the four minor *orders* that are meant! However, this collection of documents proves a valuable accession to the fund of material for a biography of Hofbauer. The individual papers, in all about two hundred, cover the period from 1786 to 1808. Special mention should be made of the letters of the Superior General Father Francesco de Paola, the letters of friends of Hofbauer in Vienna, and those of the Saint himself which he wrote from Southern Germany to Warsaw. From all these we gather many a new insight into his great plans for the establishment of his Congregation.

The Centennial Anniversary of the death of Hofbauer seemed a most fitting occasion to cast into form all this newfound documentary material of the last forty years, since the publication of Haringer's work, and from sources old and new to build up a new Life of the Saint. For this purpose I continued further researches, in so far as the troubled condition of the times would permit. At my request His Eminence Cardinal William von Rossum had the kindness to cause a thorough search to be instituted once more into the correspondence of the Nunciature of Vienna in the Propaganda Archives. A number of precious bits of information were thus collected. I examined systematically myself the Archives of the Nunciature at Vienna. The labor was richly rewarded. Thus, for example, the correspondence of the Saint with the Nuncio at Vienna, Monsignor Severoli, was found almost entire. The correspondence of the Nunciature with Rome throws much light upon our Saint and the times. So, too, an examination of the Archiepiscopal Archives at Vienna was not without results. But the letters of Hofbauer and his correspondents are only in a small part written in German, or have been preserved to us in that tongue; and in the translation, unfortunately, the personal color and touch of the manner of expression are lost.

I have been able to use the Parisian acts referred to in a preceding paragraph in a complete copy annotated by Father E. Béthune, C. SS. R.; also the acts of the State Archives of Munich, which Very Rev. Father Matthias Prechtl, the Pro-

vincial of the Bavarian Province of the Redemptorists, sent me together with the manuscripts left by Father Haringer. Of hitherto published, but unused sources, special mention should be made of the correspondence of Davoust with Napoleon, and that of Joseph von Pilat with the Countess Laura Fuchs. The letters of Dorothy Schlegel, too, could now be employed to better advantage.

My best thanks are due not only to those already mentioned as having helped in the publication of this new Life of Hofbauer, but also to His Eminence, the then Apostolic Nuncio at Vienna, now Cardinal Conte Valfré di Bonzo, to the former Secretary of the Nunciature at Vienna, Dr. Eugenio Torricella, to Fathers Pichler, Rasl, Pientka, Alphonsus Meier, and especially to Father Szoldrski, C. SS. R., who has sent me the yet unpublished acts of the Archives of Znaim and extracts and copies from many Polish works.

So far as the biographical value of the new arrangement of these materials here presented for the first time is concerned, it may be said that the character of the Saint may now be more clearly understood. Essential changes that character could not, naturally, undergo, now that in the Process of Canonization the authentic delineation of it has been given us by his own contemporaries. The province of the new task was rather to bring into greater prominence and place in their true light the vicissitudes of the Saint's career, his undertakings and his plans. Despite his simple and childlike personality, the Saint is unquestionably a personage of note in Church History. For that reason alone he deserves to be followed step by step with attention during his earthly pilgrimage. Moreover, there are certain points of view of higher moment, which have not — partly, it is true, from lack of sources of information — been taken into consideration at all, or not given their proper value. Thus we recognize now, for example, with the utmost clearness that the guiding thought of all the Saint's activity was the establishment and propagation of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer in the transalpine countries. This object he had clearly visioned from the very beginning as his life work, and for thirty-five years he pursued it with remarkable pertinacity. With a sort of

absolute recklessness and abandon he subordinated everything else to his far-reaching plans. The apostolic labors of his life, in the description of which his biographers for the most part consume themselves, we may almost regard as side-issues. Nor does this in the least lessen his greatness; on the contrary, it rather enables us to grasp it in all its fulness. Indeed, I have found justified what a Hungarian Professor at the University of Vienna wrote to me while I was engaged in this work: "The significance of Father Hofbauer is still altogether too little known and appreciated." It is quite singular, for instance, that Father Haringer should have suppressed as an evident exaggeration the assertion made by an eye-witness, that when the news of Hofbauer's death reached Rome, it produced real consternation in the Roman Curia. But when we see now the intimate relations which existed between Hofbauer and a series of Princes of the Church, among them six Nuncios, and read their various comments and views regarding the living Hofbauer, we shall no longer be surprised at that assertion.

The inner life of the Saint, however, can profit just as little now as heretofore from any written revelations of self which alone could be of guidance to us in this sphere. We must resign ourselves to the fact that in the case of Hofbauer all hope must be abandoned of coming upon any of this first class material for his biography; for even his own letters give us, as a rule, only side-lights, indirect views into his interior. There is no well-grounded hope that these omissions will ever be filled. We can hardly picture to ourselves Hofbauer writing a memoir of himself. He was a precocious child of grace. In the admirable clarity and intensity of his spiritual life, all written reflections and reasonings about himself and his soul's conditions, would have appeared to him superfluous, a loss of time, unless these had been imposed upon him as a duty by the command of his Superiors. His whole life is one continual, restless, onward striving, a glowing, unquenchable ardor, to do great things for the glory of God and the salvation of men. "The charity of Christ presseth us" is the most comprehensive expression of his inner as well as of his external life.

Still I do not apprehend that any of my readers will lay his

Life aside dissatisfied on that account. Indeed I feel that he will experience in himself the truth of the words which Abbé Edward Edgeworth, who once stood beside the unfortunate Louis XVI on the scaffold, and later, in Warsaw, for three years enjoyed the intimate friendship of our Saint, wrote to Lord Douglas, in London, concerning Hofbauer: "I am quite certain that the few minutes interview that you will grant him, will suffice for you to discover all the precious treasures that God has heaped up in the heart of this angelic man, and will make you just as enthusiastic over him as I am."

KATZELSDORF — WIENER NEUSTADT,
November 25, 1919

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First Part

CHILDHOOD AND YOUTH — DIFFICULTIES IN FOLLOWING HIS VOCATION AND IN PURSUING HIS STUDIES — ENTRANCE INTO THE CONGREGATION OF THE MOST HOLY REDEEMER — PRIESTHOOD

(1751–1786)

ST. CLEMENT MARIA HOFBAUER

CHAPTER I

In The Parental Home. (1751–1767)

JOHN HOFBAUER, better known in Catholic circles as St. Clement Maria Hofbauer, was born in Moravia, a province of Austria. In the extreme southern part of that province, where the rich grain-fields gradually slope away into the fruitful vinelands of Lower Austria, lies the city of Znaim. Coming upon this city in the course of his extensive travels, and carried away by the beauty of the landscape in which it is set, the poet Seume exclaimed: "I should like to live here — the entire surroundings are so beautiful, even when buried beneath the snow!" Among the numerous villages that dot this charming countryside is Tasswitz, an hour's journey east of the city of Znaim.

Toward the beginning of the eighteenth century, Paul Steer was Justice in the township of Tasswitz. He possessed a homestead of moderate size, consisting of several acres of land, a small vineyard, and some woodland. The daughter born to him on October 28, 1715, and given the name of Mary in Baptism, was destined to become the mother of our Saint.

On January 31, 1736, Mary Steer married Paul Hofbauer, who was her senior by three years. Paul Hofbauer had come from Budweis, Bohemia, and was a butcher by trade. After leaving the Bohemian city of Budweis and settling in the German village of Tasswitz, he followed the general custom and changed his family name, "Dvořák," into Hofbauer, its equivalent in German.[1] His wife, Mary, brought with her the

[1] In the family registers of Tasswitz the name "Dvořák" is no longer to be found as that of this family. With regard to the oft-disputed question of the Saint's nationality, the following must be remarked: His father was a Bohemian, his mother a German. His physique clearly indicated the mixture of the German and the Slav. (See p. 59.) He was born and brought up in a German district, his mother-tongue was German, and he himself frequently

possessions of her father as a dowry, and Hofbauer continued his trade in his new home.

A few days after the humble wedding in Tasswitz, a ceremony of unusual pomp and splendor took place in the Church of the Augustinian Fathers in Vienna. The occasion was the marriage of the Archduchess Maria Theresa, daughter and heiress of the Emperor Charles VI, to Duke Francis Stephen, of Lorraine. We make special mention of this, because both the joys and the sorrows of the Imperial Family seem to have been peculiarly shared by the Hofbauer family in Tasswitz. Thus it can hardly be set down as a mere coincidence, but rather as a mark of loyalty and a tribute of patriotism, that the baptismal names given by the Hofbauers to their elder children remind one of the Imperial Family. The eldest boy received the name of the then ruling Emperor Charles; the second boy Francis, the name of the Prince-Consort; and to the first child born after the death of the Emperor, in 1740, was given the name of the new Empress of the realm, Maria Theresa.

The family of the Hofbauers rapidly increased in number in the quiet little village of Tasswitz. In the meantime, stirring events were occurring in the world without. Austria was struggling for her very existence, and the struggle continued until the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle in the year 1748. Maria Theresa at once set her hand to the work of reconstruction. Radical changes in government, made necessary by a frightful war which the country had barely survived, were put into operation. These reconstructive measures in the internal government of Austria, however, gave rise to strained relations between the State and the Church and at last culminated in Josephism, which, in effect, was little less than real schism. Unfortunately for the Church in Austria, these government reforms occurred at the very time when the new teachings, misnamed the Philosophy of the Enlightened, together with Gallicanism and Jansenism, began to harass the inner life of

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and emphatically declared that he was a German. (See Innerkofler, p. 63.) As to his name, be it noted, that the Saint almost invariably called and signed himself "Hoffbauer." The present way of spelling it is, therefore, incorrect; but I have adhered to it, because it has become the usual way of writing it.

the Church, and when it was extremely difficult to cope with dangers of this kind, on account of the general conspiracy of Europe against the Jesuits. This great crisis for Religion and for the Church in Austria dates from about the year 1750, and must be clearly understood if one would properly interpret the life and activity of our Saint.

The first volume of the French Encyclopedia, which was at once the weapon and the symbol of the Enlightenment so hostile to Christ and His Church, appeared in the year 1751. In the same year Hofbauer began his earthly career. He was born on December 26, 1751. He was baptized on the same day, and received the name of St. John the Evangelist at the Sacred Font.

John was the ninth of the twelve children with whom the Hofbauers were blessed. Seven of these died in early childhood. Of the five girls only one, Mary Barbara, who was eight years older than John, survived her childhood. Of the seven boys, four reached the age of manhood, John and his elder brothers, Charles, Lawrence, and Herman.

These numerous deaths were severe trials indeed, but a still heavier cross was laid upon the family when, on July 26, 1758, the grim reaper once again appeared in the little home, and cut down the father and bread-winner of the family. Paul Hofbauer was forty-seven years of age at this time, and in the full vigor of perfect manhood. He left behind him the reputation of a thoroughly pious, upright, and excellent Catholic. The fact that two years previously war had broken out afresh in Austria, made his loss all the more keenly felt by the dear ones from whom he had been snatched. The Seven Years' War! It goes hand in hand with the boyhood years of our Saint. In the very year in which Paul Hofbauer died, Frederick the Great advanced at the head of his army and made great inroads into Moravia. No doubt, it was with a heavy heart and with no slight misgivings that the widowed mother with her fatherless children faced the uncertain future.

The day of his father's death was never effaced from the memory of our Saint. It was not so much the sad occurrence itself that made so deep an impression on the mind

of this favored child of six, as an incident that occurred at the bier of his beloved father. His mother led him to the foot of the Crucifix, and pointing to the image of the Crucified Saviour, said to him: "See, my child, henceforth He is your father. Take care that you do not grieve Him by any sin." These simple words, spoken at such a time, sank deeply into the soul of the boy. Never, as he himself declared even in his old age, could he forget them, and they had the effect of making him more serious and thoughtful than ever.

This touching incident is pictured in a painting which hangs over the tomb of the Saint in the Church of St. Mary's on the Strand, in Vienna. It is the first and most authentic incident of his childhood days. The mother and child are here portrayed with a master hand.

In the course of the next few years his three brothers, one after the other, left home. Charles, the eldest, entered the military service, and was assigned to the cavalry then on duty guarding the southern frontier of Hungary against the Turks. When his term of service had expired, he settled in Temesvár, and there established a butcher business. His brother Lawrence engaged in the same line of business, but remained in Moravia. Herman went to Znaim, where in later years he opened a little store. Mary Barbara and John remained at home with their mother, who engaged the services of one Andrew Priesching, a butcher from Schattau in Lower Austria, to continue the business of her deceased husband. Priesching, of course, made his home with the Hofbauers and, after his marriage to Mary Barbara, in 1765, took over the business with the household. The widowed mother thereafter lived in retirement. John, as far as can be ascertained, remained at home two years longer, so that after his father's death he was fully ten years under the watchful care of his mother.

We possess no further particulars concerning this good woman, to whom the early training of a Saint was entrusted. The unstinted praise given her by her son, however, constitutes the best possible testimony to her high and saintly character. Repeatedly in his later years did Hofbauer de-

clare that whatever he possessed of worth or virtue, he owed, after God, to his wise and prudent mother, who had consecrated him to God even before his birth. In the case of Hofbauer, however, the desires and efforts of a good mother to mould the life and shape the character of her son met with a singularly ready response. The remarkable susceptibility to the supernatural and to things spiritual, with which heaven had endowed him, made him as pliable as wax in her hands.

The foundation and principal cause of every saintly life is an extraordinary outpouring of divine grace into the soul. Very properly, therefore, the biography of a saint should begin with an account of the natural and supernatural endowments of the person destined by heaven for the honor of the Church's altars. For the most part, however, these things must remain mysteries which we cannot fathom, and which we can understand only in part, even when the whole life of the saint lies unfolded before us. The history of Hofbauer's life, as it has been preserved to us, supplies us with very few details from his childhood years. But few as these details are, they are nevertheless sufficiently significant, in that they tend to show that the action of divine grace, which attracts souls to the higher life and fits them for the practice of heroic virtue, began to manifest itself in Hofbauer at a very early age, and not merely at a later period in his life.

Even as a child, for instance, we find in him a great love for prayer and a remarkable fondness for its constant exercise. John, the Benjamin of the family, would often gather his elder brothers and sisters and the servants of the household about him for the recitation of the Rosary, his favorite devotion even in those years. Among the days sacred to the Blessed Virgin Mary, he gave preference, for what reason we know not, to the Feast of the Annunciation. He took special delight in distributing among the poorer children of the village the food of which he deprived himself; and his scant savings of money he gave to the needy or offered as stipends for Masses. He even essayed the practice of mortification and of corporal works of penance, and counted himself fortunate when his mother, as a reward for unusually

good behavior, permitted him to fast on Saturdays until nightfall in honor of the Mother of God.

He carefully avoided whatever might be a cause of sorrow to his mother. Her admonitions fell upon willing ears, and her good example found in him an eager imitator. This truly Christian woman, her hands filled with household duties and the care of her children, knew the value of time, and had long since accustomed herself to make good use of spare moments. John was not slow to copy her example in this. Even as a lad of eight he grew quite vexed when he heard older people say that they were taking a walk "to kill time." Not understanding what they meant by the expression "to kill time," he asked his mother, and when she had explained it to him, he remarked: "If people have nothing to do, they ought to pray."

This habit of consecrating his leisure moments to the exercise of prayer he retained through life. In his old age, preaching in the Church of St. Ursula, in Vienna, he grew quite vehement against the phrase "to kill time." Thus many a word that fell from the lips of this Apostle in the confessional or in the pulpit to touch the hearts of those who heard him, may have been but the echo of some word spoken by that simple peasant woman who had long since found her rest in the village churchyard in Tasswitz.

The ideal of Christian education was here attained with unusual perfection. This good mother succeeded in developing early to an eminent degree the supernatural qualities which God had planted in the heart of her child. The extraordinary susceptibility of his soul to the operations of the Holy Ghost, this living and acting on a higher plane, clear and profound conception of the Mysteries of religion and of their bearing on all the questions of life, great and small, the Apostle of Prayer, the Hero of Mortification, the Father of the Poor and of the Orphan: the marks of all these traits of the future Saint are clearly recognizable in the child.

And this supernatural life of grace, developed at so early a stage and so soon reaching its full maturity, endured throughout the life of Hofbauer without undergoing any substantial change. Undoubtedly, Hofbauer had also his weaknesses of

character and his faults. He himself frequently insisted, that had he been more faithful in coöperating with the signal graces bestowed upon him, he should have accomplished much more for God and for souls than he did. But these self-accusations and regrets have reference to his life as a whole, and are rather an admission of certain frailties of which the Saints, even when they have reached to heights of holiness, find it hard to rid themselves. Of any serious defection, or of a period of lukewarmness and indifference, or even of a slight deviation from the straight and narrow path upon which he had entered in childhood, there cannot be found the least evidence in his after life. He had to bewail neither a period of laxity, as a St. Augustine, nor a time of tepidity and resistance to grace, as a St. Theresa. When he wished in the evening of life to trace his many fruitful activities to their secret source, he was obliged to travel up the stream of years to his childhood days: and this he never did without sentiments of holy joy and deep emotion. He himself is our best witness of his own childhood. The incidents we have related and the traits of character to which we have referred, originally came from his own lips. It was his delight in his old age to give form and color to his admonitions and instructions by recalling and dwelling upon incidents from his youthful days. He wished others to join him in giving thanks to God for the unusual graces for which he felt himself incapable of making any adequate return to the Giver of all good gifts.

From what has been said, it is clear, that in the life of this man of God there can be no question of a dramatic development of the interior life, with the suspenses, the crises, and the catastrophes that usually mark such a development. For some readers the description of such a life may lack a certain charm. He that crosses the ocean in a frail skiff can tell of experiences that remain unknown to those who make the same voyage in a majestic steamer. It is this latter that Hofbauer's life resembles. The lashing of the waves of trial is not wanting; the voyage at times becomes even stormy: but in reality, these are merely the external buffetings of the vicissitudes of life. In all the decisive moments of human life he remains

undisturbed and assured from the beginning of the ultimate victory of the right. The severest blows of adversity disconcert him only for a moment. With almost majestic serenity and security he goes through life, a joyful, pleasant smile upon his countenance.

CHAPTER II

YEARS OF APPRENTICESHIP — PILGRIMAGES — DIFFICULTIES IN FOLLOWING HIS VOCATION. (1767–1780)

EVEN in her old age Barbara Priesching remembered that her brother John had received instruction in Latin from the priests in Tasswitz. John's most ardent desire was to be a priest. No one was surprised at this, for the child of grace everywhere made a deep impression on his elders by his piety. His wish was shared by his devout mother, whose daily prayer was to behold her son ministering as a priest at the altar of God. But the hopes of the boy and of his mother were to remain unfulfilled for a long, long time. When John's schooling was nearing completion and the question of his vocation was to be decided, it was evident that the widow was in no position to meet the expenses of a seminary training for her son. Perhaps, too, the economic conditions consequent upon the Seven Years' War made themselves felt in the case. At all events, John had finally to decide upon learning a trade, so as to be able, later on, to make his own living. But as the butcher business, hitherto followed in the family, did not at all appeal to him, he chose the more congenial one of a baker.

According to the Records of the Bakers' Union of Znaim, John Hofbauer began his three years' apprenticeship as baker with Master-Baker Matthias Dobsch on March 31, 1767, in Znaim, and was there initiated into the mysteries of the bake-oven by a fellow-apprentice named Nachtigall. Hofbauer remained a lifelong friend of his master, and later on, even as Vicar-General, did not deem it beneath his dignity to visit Dobsch and pay him his respects.

Master Dobsch belonged to the old type of upright and honest masters, who considered his apprentices as members of his own household. An elder son of the family was gifted with a fine voice and was an excellent singer. From him Hofbauer

learned the technique of correct singing. Our Saint was by nature very fond of singing. He went through life chanting hymns of praise to God. His favorite hymn was that which begins with the words, "To Thy honor and glory, Lord." In early childhood he had formed the habit of singing this hymn each morning upon awakening, and this habit he never discontinued.

But it was the youngest child of Master Dobsch's family, a lad of five years, that was especially attracted to the new apprentice. The little fellow insisted on accompanying Hofbauer whenever he went out to serve the bread to the patrons, and this pleased the child's mother very much. Hofbauer, however, soon found that he could make little headway in this manner, and so was obliged to take the child on one arm, while on the other he carried his basket of bread. Thus it came to pass that the good people of Znaim, seeing him as he made his daily rounds with the child on his shoulder, began to call him St. Christopher.

Humanly speaking, Hofbauer had every reason to be contented and happy in his new surroundings. Deep in his heart, however, he was really not so, for he could not banish from that heart his desire for the Sacred Priesthood. The conviction that he was not in the sphere to which Divine Providence called him, never left him, and indeed became a source of not a little disquiet to him. In those days, as he confessed in later years, he constantly felt himself urged to choose a state of life in which he could accomplish not only much, but very much for the glory of God, and he besought God day and night to bestow such a vocation upon him.

This desire he did not lock within his heart as a jealously guarded secret: he made it known to his master and the household. Returning from his route one day, he told Mistress Dobsch how he had heard the people crying out, "St. Christopher! St. Christopher!" as he was passing by, and that he too had turned round to see the Saint, but was informed that he himself was the St. Christopher to whom they referred. He knew nothing as yet of the legend of St. Christopher; but when the mistress of the house had explained that the Saint was called "Christopher" or "Christ-Bearer," because he had once car-

ried the Infant Jesus across a stream, Hofbauer, on the impulse of the moment, exclaimed: "Oh, would that I too might become a St. Christopher and bear my Lord and God in these hands of mine!"

Hofbauer did not complete the usual three years of apprenticeship with Master Dobsch in Znaim. For reasons unknown to us, before the expiration of this time, he took a position as baker in the near-by monastery of Bruck. As in later years he proved himself an expert baker, it is probable that he finished his apprenticeship there, and was released from his apprenticeship by the Head Baker at the monastery.

While still an apprentice, either at Znaim or at the monastery, Hofbauer set out with a fellow-workman on a pilgrimage to Rome. This was in the year 1769. His companion was Peter Kunzmann, his senior by one year, and a native of Frankish-Krumbach. Where Kunzmann was employed at the time, or how he became acquainted with Hofbauer, is not known. As they made the journey entirely on foot, they encountered many hardships on the way, but at length reached the Eternal City in safety. After satisfying their devotion by visiting the famous sanctuaries in the City of Peter, they returned to their native land and to their work, continuing thereafter to be good friends, notwithstanding they differed very much in temperament and mental endowments. Kunzmann, as Hofbauer once declared, was a very ordinary man, "who knew only how to bake bread. He was very dear to me, particularly on account of his frankness and his simplicity of heart." To Kunzmann, however, we are indebted for much valuable information regarding the life of his sainted friend.

Hard work awaited Hofbauer in the bakery of the monastery. The times were bad. The evil effects always following in the wake of long years of war continued to be felt. The crops had failed, and the misery increased when famine visited the land. At one time during the Seven Years' War, the Abbot Mayer daily distributed food from the monastery to nine hundred poor persons. The abbot Gregory Lambeck, who, in 1764, took up the reins of government at the monastery of Bruck, was not less generous to the needy than his predecessor in office, and as a result the bakers at the monastery were

kept very busy. Famine was closely followed by typhus fever, which, in 1770, claimed many victims in the district of Znaim.

Hofbauer was sorely afflicted at the sight of all this suffering and wretchedness, and sought to relieve the distress in every possible way. Frequently he would deprive himself of his meals, and give his portion to the poor. That this was not a slight act of self-denial for him, can well be imagined. Fasting at this time, as he himself admitted, was very hard on him, for he was just reaching man's estate and he had a magnificent physique. Oftentimes, too, he would deny himself his well-earned rest and his sleep, and spend the night communing with God, imploring Heaven to have compassion on his stricken fellow-men.

These and similar sad experiences, no doubt, helped to intensify the desire for the priesthood, which he still cherished in his heart of hearts; for from this time that desire seems to have grown into a fixed determination to reach and enter the sanctuary at all costs. But he perceived no hope of carrying out his determination, and so, as every path to the altar seemed closed against him, he resolved to become a hermit.

In those days such a resolution did not seem so strange as it would seem in our own day. Hermitages were to be found at every turn. Many a one who had met with misfortune or reverses, or who found the gates of the monastery locked against him, left the world and became a hermit. The valley of the Thaya, to the north of Znaim, seems to have been particularly favored by these hermits as a place of retreat and retirement. Spots bearing the names of former hermitages are pointed out to the traveler even at this late day. Such, for instance, are "Einsiedel-Leiten" near Znaim, and the "Einsiedelei" near Hardegg.

The hermits of those days were supported by the alms offered by the pious faithful. It is not improbable that as a child Hofbauer had reverently listened to the fervent exhortations of such hermits. Now he himself wished to become a hermit. He had no intention, however, of settling in the vicinity of his own home. During his sojourn in the Eternal City he had visited several of the hermitages there, and had become acquainted with the manner of life led by the hermits

in the Papal States. With Kunzmann he had gone out to Tivoli, near which, on a little knoll surrounded by olive trees, there stood a chapel dedicated to Our Blessed Lady, enshrining an ancient Byzantine picture of the Madonna. This shrine, called "La Madonna di Quintiliolo" after the villa of the unfortunate Quintilio Varo, was a very popular place of pilgrimage, much favored by the Popes. Attached to the little church was a hermitage for six hermits, to whom the care of the shrine was entrusted.

Hofbauer returned from that pilgrimage, but the hermitage of Tivoli was never forgotten. His longing for a life wholly consecrated to God, his great love for Rome, the singular fascination which Southern Europe held for him — all these things were so many voices calling him to Tivoli. He resolved to leave his native land and to pass the rest of his days as a hermit in the Papal States, if possible, at "La Madonna di Quintiliolo."

Kunzmann was easily won over to this project. They soon discovered, however, that even their combined savings would be insufficient for their needs. Accordingly, Kunzmann sold some old clothes of his, which after the fashion of those days were ornamented with gilded buttons, and from the sale realized a neat little sum and made a welcome addition to their funds.

Thus it was, that, in 1771, two years after their first pilgrimage to Rome, these two friends once more turned their steps southward, firmly convinced that they were leaving their native land forever. The entire journey was again made on foot. And so, writes Brunner, "the two journeyed on through the towns and villages of Italy, like an apparition from the dead past, when St. Francis with Massaeus, or with Leo, or with some other of his disciples traveled through woods and meadows, through cities and hamlets, over hills and dales, chanting the divine praises, happy children of God and sons of that poverty which they had chosen as their portion in life and which they endured with unfailing cheerfulness and abiding peace of heart."[1]

This time their hopes were not to be defeated. The Bishop

[1] Brunner, *Clement Maria Hofbauer*, p. 22.

of Tivoli examined the two candidates. In vivid colors he pictured to them the hardships of the eremitical life, but when he found them none the less determined to embrace that state, he granted them the necessary permission to join the hermits of Quintiliolo. They now received new names: Hofbauer, that of the holy Bishop and Martyr, Clement of Ancyra, and Kunzmann, that of Emanuel.[2]

The daily life of the hermits of Quintiliolo, like that of the solitaries of old, was a combination of prayer and manual labor. The brethren had each his own little garden, where he raised vegetables for his support. They were likewise in charge of the chapel at the pilgrimage. In a manner truly original, as Kunzmann was wont to relate, the pilgrims and passers-by were invited to honor the Blessed Mother of God. With a sudden knocking on the little window of the hermitage, the hermits would attract the attention of the wayfarer, and when anyone inquired "Who's there?" he was answered from within, "The Madonna of Quintiliolo."

Hofbauer here found a happiness he had never known before. The quiet, undisturbed life of prayer in this solitary spot surrounded on all sides by the beauties of nature, was to him a paradise on earth. Not without reason he may have believed that at last he had come to the end of his spiritual wanderings, reached the goal destined for him by God, and found a satisfactory substitute for the priesthood which seemed so constantly and so mysteriously barred against him. But it was not long before he discovered his mistake. Even as a hermit at Tivoli, Hofbauer was an apostle at heart, possessing at once the energetic nature of a missionary and the burning desire to accomplish great things for the honor and glory of God. It was inevitable, therefore, that this trait of his character should again rise to the surface, even during these quiet days of retirement from the world. Though he may not have suspected it at the time, Tivoli was only the novitiate, where he was to discover his real mission in life. Gradually it be-

[2] When Hofbauer took the name "Maria" is not known. Probably it was not until he become a Redemptorist, in honor of St. Alphonsus Maria de Liguori. In his signatures, he almost invariably used his baptismal name, John. The name by which he was called, however, was Clement. He celebrated his patronal feast on January 23, the Feast of St. Clement of Ancyra.

came clear to him that the hermitage was as little his allotted sphere as the bakery. He therefore began seriously to reconsider his choice of a state in life. In prayer the light came to him, and with it the conviction that he was called to a more active part in the service of the Master than that which the vocation of a solitary provided. Trusting to the guidance of Divine Providence, he resolved to quit Italy and take up his studies at home. Thus, after living the life of a hermit for about half a year, he left Quintiliolo. He did so without notifying Kunzmann. As the latter might feel contented in the kind of life he had embraced, Hofbauer deemed it more prudent to keep his own interior struggles to himself, and not run the risk of robbing his friend of that peace of mind which might well be his. Accordingly, Clement disappeared from the hermitage one day, without even bidding good-bye to the friend and companion who had accompanied him thither.

The few months spent at Quintiliolo, however, were not without their spiritual benefits. Indeed, they left their impress on the whole later life of Hofbauer. In after years Tivoli was to him more than a sweet remembrance: it was a haven of refuge, where he found solace and balm of comfort in the hour of trial; a retreat, to which his spirit once more retired when arduous duties weighed him down. Oftentimes, when worn by fatigue during his apostolic labors, Tivoli would rise up before his eyes, to hearten and strengthen him for the struggle. Indeed, when his labors for God and for souls were nearly done, one of the great desires of his heart was to spend his declining years at Quintiliolo, and to have the happiness of dying there. To the end of his days he kept as a precious remembrance the name he had borne as a hermit, and it is under that name that Holy Mother Church has listed him in the catalogue of her Saints.

In the monastery at Bruck the monks had conducted since the sixteenth century a college of humanities for about thirty boys. On his return from Quintiliolo Hofbauer obtained permission to attend the classes there. The time he had spent there as an apprenticed baker had acquainted him with conditions at Klosterbruck, and it is quite possible that in his musings at Tivoli the college at Klosterbruck had entered into his

plans for the future. According to one account, his cousin John Jahn, the son of his godfather, was instrumental in obtaining admission for him. Jahn, who was born at Tasswitz, wished, like Hofbauer, to enter the sacred ministry, and was far more fortunate in attaining his heart's ambition than his poorer cousin. After completing his collegiate studies, he entered the monastery of Klosterbruck as a novice. This was in the year 1772, the year of Hofbauer's return from Tivoli. This account may, therefore, be the correct one. In exchange for his board and tuition the new student was to render light service to the monastery. He was appointed valet to the Abbot, and as such he had, among other things, to set the monastery table.

Hofbauer was in his twenty-first year when he took his place side by side with the young students of Latin in the classroom at the monastery. The chagrin of being obliged to begin his studies at an age at which others were completing theirs, was tempered and sweetened by the thought that now at last he was on the direct road to the priesthood. What grieved him most was that his new studies and new duties left him very little time for prayer. The contrast between Tivoli, where prayer had been the usual order of the day, and the monastery, where his waking hours were almost exclusively claimed either by his studies or by the services required of him, could not but be keenly felt by one who so habitually moved in a spiritual atmosphere. His cousin John Jahn had widely different views concerning the necessity and the purpose of prayer. The clever young theologian, absorbed in his books and carried away by the fascination of his studies, was so intent on the acquisition of knowledge and the cultivation of his mind, that he neglected the things of the spirit. Hofbauer noticed this with much sorrow and not a little concern. Very frankly he declared to him that if he did not wish to come to a bad end, he ought to pray more and study less. The future proved that his fears had been well-founded. Jahn was ordained to the priesthood in 1775. Hofbauer assisted at his First Holy Mass, on July 9, with a heart saddened by anxious forebodings. Jahn succeeded in amassing a vast amount of knowledge, became adept in the oriental languages, and in the

course of time was appointed Vice-Director of the College. In 1782, he received the degree of Doctor of Theology at Olmuetz, and in 1784, after the suppression of the monastery, returned to Olmuetz as Professor. Later we find him as a Professor in the University of Vienna, and still later, in 1805, he was created a Canon of St. Stephen's. He died in 1816.

Jahn had a very facile pen and was a prolific writer. His Hebrew text of the Bible had then and has, even at the present day, a wide circulation. Unfortunately, however, the warning which Hofbauer had sounded years before, seems to have remained unheeded. Unconsciously, perhaps, but none the less surely, Jahn became tainted with the rationalistic tendencies of his times, and soon found himself in conflict with the teachings of the Church. As a result, several of his works have been placed on the Index of Forbidden Books.

We possess no further particulars regarding Hofbauer's years of study at Klosterbruck. It is generally conceded, however, that he rounded out the four years' course, which would account for the period intervening between 1772 and 1776.

But now a new obstacle seems to have arisen in his path, forcing him to give up his studies and relinquish all hope of ever attaining the coveted goal of the priesthood. Our sources of information are entirely silent on the cause which again closed to him the path to the altar. Some are of the opinion that after completing his course at the monastery college, he lacked all means to continue his studies elsewhere. But this is hardly credible. A prudent young man of twenty years would hardly have begun the study of Latin without being sure of reaching the end. Again, it is said that his benefactor, the Abbot Gregory, died in 1775. This is an error. Lambeck lived and governed the monastery until 1781. Greater weight is to be given to the belief that on his return from Tivoli Hofbauer decided to become a Premonstratentian at Klosterbruck, and that it was on this condition and with this understanding that he was permitted to join the classes at the monastery college, with the prospect of continuing his studies. If this be the case, we must conclude that Hofbauer gradually came to realize that he was not called to be a monk. Conditions at the monastery at this time may have helped to convince him of this; at this

late date, it is impossible to say. The fact is, that the spirit of rationalism was spreading more and more, and that even the convents and monasteries of Austria did not wholly escape its blight. One can readily understand, that all true children of the Church, aware of this fact, were filled with fear and alarm. While Hofbauer was attending the Latin classes at Klosterbruck, the Reform Party, under such leaders as Swieten, Rautenstrauch and Sonnenfels, became active in Austria, and began to harass the Church with its revolutionary ideas. Too often, alas! even the Bishops offered only a feeble resistance to these attacks. They connived at reforms which in their hearts they did not and could not countenance; worse still, they weakly even consented at times to coöperate directly with the government in effecting these reforms. Examples of such cases are to be found in Moravia itself. Thus we find the last Abbot of the rich Premonstratentian Monastery of Hradisch lending his efforts to government officials in rearranging and adjusting the curriculum of the University of Olmuetz to meet the requirements of the new reform. His brother-monk, the Abbot of Klosterbruck, committed a similar indiscretion by accepting the post of Privy Counselor to the Emperor, from which it is evident that he was a person who was certainly *non ingrata* to the Government. Did some such fact, perhaps, come to Hofbauer's knowledge, to wound his fine sense of what was strictly Catholic, because so little in accord with his high ideals? It is possible: but that this was anything more than a contributing reason for discontinuing his studies at this time, is hardly probable; for later on, after a lapse of several years, and as soon as the necessary funds were put into his hands, he was glad to resume his studies, notwithstanding any change of policy or of ideals that had taken place at Klosterbruck. Hence some other obstacle, insurmountable at the time, must have been thrown across his path, forcing him, regretfully, to wait once more in patient trust, until God in His power removed that obstacle or in His goodness lifted him over it. Certain it is that the priesthood was the one great ambition of his heart: in his childhood he had been drawn to it; in his youth he had yearned for it; and he had spent the early years of his manhood to attain it. That

he could have been led even temporarily to abandon his hope of eventually reaching it, except by circumstances over which he had no control, seems altogether unlikely.

Hofbauer, however, did not resume his trade as baker. He returned to the life of a hermit, and, in 1777, clad in a hermit's garb, set out on a third pilgrimage to Rome. He had done all in his power to complete his studies for the priesthood; failing in this, he decided, it seems, to seek peace at Tivoli, where he had tasted such sweet happiness before. This project, however, was not to be realized. Hofbauer traveled *viâ* Vienna, and there joined a company of pilgrims on their way to Mariazell. The people called him the "pious Clement," and on account of the garb he wore, generally thought him to be a Capuchin. It is probable, too, that he had a beard, for he was then twenty-six years of age.

The rest of his journey to Rome was made in the company of two students, who had the intention of joining a religious Order in the Eternal City, and had associated themselves with Hofbauer because he knew the way thither. After reaching Rome, however, only one of the students decided to remain, and Hofbauer was obliged to abandon his plans and accompany the other student back over the Alps. In Carinthia their funds gave out, and they were obliged to beg their way. For the present Hofbauer had neither the desire nor the means for another pilgrimage to Rome. He resolved, therefore, to lead the life of a hermit at home.

A half-hour's journey from Tasswitz, on the way to Znaim, lay a small village named Muehlfraun, where there was a beautiful pilgrimage church. This church was the work of the Abbot Gregory Lambeck, who had it built on the site of the old edifice which had become dilapidated. It was adorned with beautiful frescoes from the brush of Maulpertsch. It was dedicated in 1776. From this time, pilgrimages to this shrine, which had been famous for years, became more numerous than ever before.

In the vicinity of Muehlfraun, in the Pelzer Forest, lay a part of the Hofbauer property. It is here that we next find Hofbauer established as a hermit. Whether or not he settled here immediately on his return from Italy, in 1777, is not cer-

tain: but we do know that he did so with the permission of the civil authorities, and that his brother Herman came over from Znaim and assisted him in building the hermitage. Hofbauer lived here one, or, at the most, two years. During this time he contributed to the support of his aged mother and his sister, who had a large family, by lending a hand in the cultivation of the fields. The pilgrims to Muehlfraun delighted to stop at the hermitage and kept him supplied with food. In return he gave them small wooden crosses, and offered a few words of salutary advice. At times he would lead the penitential procession to the shrine, carrying a huge wooden cross on his shoulders, the pilgrims following with smaller ones. This was still a favorite penitential exercise in certain parts of Austria, especially during the holy season of Lent, for in those days the devotion of the common people retained many of the customs of the Middle Ages, unknown to us nowadays. The Government, to be sure, was earnestly striving to " purify " religion by ridding it of practices of this kind, which were so offensive to the enlightened modern mind. Thus, in 1772, it was ordained that " the silly going about of persons bearing crosses and scourging themselves during Lent, is forbidden." But the common people, as a rule, troubled themselves very little about such prohibitions.

Hofbauer's hermitage, however, lacked the most important essential to such a life — solitude. The stir of the village life of Muehlfraun, so close at hand, and the constant coming and going of pilgrims, soon rendered his retreat in the Pelzer Forest distasteful to him. And so, in the first half of the year 1779, he deliberately abandoned Muehlfraun, and petitioned the Moravian government for the deserted hermitage in the vicinity of Voettau on the River Thaya, about thirty kilometers north of Znaim. Not far from this town, on the summit of one of the mountains, are the ruins of the Castle of Zornstein. To the north of the mountain, and on the right bank of the Thaya, there once stood an ancient church dedicated to the Most Blessed Trinity. To this sanctuary, during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, vast multitudes of pilgrims from Lower Austria and from Moravia repaired each year on Trinity Sunday for the celebration of the Feast. A bene-

ficed clergyman and a hermit conducted the divine services and took care of the church. This place of pilgrimage, however, was abandoned in the year 1784. Of the church there now remains nothing but the ruined walls and the tower. The residence and the hermitage which were attached to it have disappeared altogether.

It is quite possible that Hofbauer himself had taken part in some of the pilgrimages that set out each year from Moravia to Voettau, and had thus come to know of the existence of the hermitage there. Situated in a charming valley, surrounded by a wood, and sufficiently removed from the village, it suited his tastes in every way. Since the priesthood now seemed definitely closed to him, his sole intent at this time must have been to consecrate himself seriously and irrevocably to the life of a hermit. But in the designs of heaven this was not to be. His application for the vacant hermitage near the ruins of Zornstein was evidently refused by the civil authorities. How he reacted to this refusal we do not know, except that he now abandoned as altogether unfeasible his project of spending the rest of his life as a hermit, and resolved to go back into the world and work out his salvation as a baker.

Early in the year 1780, it would appear, Hofbauer went to Vienna, and there obtained employment with one Master Weyrig, who had a bakery at the " Eiserne Birne." This house was located in what is known to-day as St. John's Street, opposite the Ursuline Convent, and next to the house in which the Saint, during the last seven years of his life, was engaged in labors quite different from those which now occupied him.

Years, fraught with many changes, filled with blasted hopes, lay behind him, and the end was not yet. It is to be regretted that our information about this period of his life is so meager. The external happenings at this time are known but vaguely; the more intimate workings of his soul, not at all. There is uncertainty everywhere. Authentic particulars of his spiritual and interior life during these years are almost entirely lacking. Not a single letter written by him at any time before his entrance into the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer has been preserved to us. Nevertheless the sources referred to, meager as they are, enable us at least to divine what took

place within his soul, when, after an interval of ten years, he was to go back into the world as a baker. Stripped of its details, the story of Hofbauer's youth and young manhood presents him to us repeatedly in the selfsame guise: Baker . . . Hermit . . . Student . . . Hermit . . . Baker! Instead of approaching his wished-for goal, he had been going round in a circle, making a detour which consumed ten precious years of his life, and led him to exactly the same point from which he had started — a bakery. Humanly speaking, his every attempt to reach out and up after better and higher things had ended in failure: his life thus far had been little less than one long series of defeats and disappointments. For the young, who are inclined to expect too much from this life, failure, untempered by occasional success, is as gall to the palate: hope constantly deferred, desire perpetually unfulfilled, endeavor always unrewarded, tend not merely to dishearten, not only to crush and destroy ambition, but to sour the disposition and embitter the soul as well. Had Hofbauer been less spiritual-minded, this might easily have been the effect of the many rebuffs meted out to him. But pessimism and cynicism were not part of his character. No doubt he arrived in Vienna sad of heart, perhaps even bewildered by what the world calls fortune; but we cannot picture him as embittered, hugging his grievances to himself, and indulging in self-pity. His whole being was too firmly anchored in God to allow him to revolt against the dispositions of that Divine Providence which in its wisdom "reacheth from end to end mightily and ordereth all things sweetly." That a man can serve God and work out his salvation in any station of life is one of the fundamental truths in the Christian's philosophy of life; and to Clement, a man much given to prayer and meditation on things divine, and therefore not deprived of that supernatural light which comes to those who pray, it could not have seemed difficult to accept his failures as permitted by God for his own greater sanctification. If anything did disturb his interior, it could have been nothing but the fear that perhaps he had been running counter to the divine will in seeking wider fields to cultivate for God, when God was asking of him no more than the humbler service of a faithful Christian in the world. There

was comfort in the thought, however, that if he had erred in this, he had erred nobly, and had failed rather on the side of generosity than by niggardliness. Moreover, his life as a hermit was not a loss of time: during those years of solitude he stored up treasures of grace and spiritual strength for the future.

Convinced, then, that God asked of him nothing greater than the service of a laboring-man in the world, and resolving to give that service generously and faithfully, he resumed his former trade in Vienna. His piety did not suffer in the least. On Sundays, at a certain hour, he regularly served the priest at one or two of the Masses in the Cathedral of St. Stephen's. In later years he often referred to the consolation he derived at this time from the fact that he had but to take a few steps from the "Eiserne Birne" where he was then employed, to reach the Ursuline Church across the street.

Regarding the obstacles which debarred him from the priesthood as altogether insurmountable, the question of his vocation seemed to him definitely settled. It was, indeed, high time that it should be, for he was now approaching his thirtieth year. And yet, though he did not suspect it, his real mission in life was still before him. For a short time only was Master Weyrig to enjoy the benefits of Clement's conscientious services, with whom he was so satisfied that he was actually thinking of binding him still more closely to his family and his home.

CHAPTER III

AT THE UNIVERSITY OF VIENNA. (1780 [1781?]–1784)

WHILE serving Mass at St. Stephen's, Hofbauer had attracted the attention of three ladies of the nobility. They were sisters, daughters of Von Maul, a secretary in the office of the Marshal at Court, and were in very comfortable circumstances. One day an opportunity was unexpectedly afforded them to become better acquainted with the young man whose whole demeanor had so long impressed them. While they were attending the services at St. Stephen's on a certain Sunday, a terrific storm broke over the city. After the Mass, as they lingered in the vestibule of the church, helplessly looking out at the rain and the flooded streets, Hofbauer happened along and noticed their embarrassment. Going up to them, he respectfully inquired whether he might not go and order a carriage to take them home. The ladies gratefully accepted the offer, and when they learned that he was going in the same direction, they invited him to ride with them. This short ride from St. Stephen's to Singer Street, where the ladies lived, proved to be the turning-point of Hofbauer's life. The three sisters adroitly led the conversation to the subject of his vocation, remarking that he was probably a student preparing for the sacred priesthood. "Such has been my most ardent desire since childhood," Clement admitted, adding, "but I am obliged to forego it, because I have not the means wherewith to prosecute my studies." At this the eldest sister exclaimed: "If there be no other obstacle, we will gladly see that you reach the goal of your desires." And forthwith they promised to provide him with the necessary means.

One can readily imagine with what sentiments of joy and gratitude Clement returned home from church. That rainy Sunday morning changed the whole course of his life. The one insurmountable obstacle between Clement and the priesthood was the lack of funds to pay for his tuition: and now that these

pious and wealthy ladies had promised to remove this obstacle, he was assured that the way to the priesthood stood open to him. His hour of deliverance had come at last.

Master Weyrig, naturally, made every effort to retain the services of his honest and competent assistant. He came out bluntly with his plans, and offered him the hand of his daughter in marriage. For many another young man, such a prospect would have been a severe test of his vocation. But in view of all we know of Hofbauer, and considering that the crown of his desires so long denied him was now at last within his reach, it is difficult to believe that Weyrig's tempting offer made him waver even for a moment. At all events, he left the "Eiserne Birne," and entered the University of Vienna, taking lodgings with a family from Znaim by the name of Mayer.

The exact date of this eventful turn in Hofbauer's career cannot be stated with certainty. Unfortunately, his name cannot be found in the records of the University of Vienna, and other sources of information we have none. There can be little doubt that he attended the University during the scholastic term of 1781–1782, and perhaps even during the previous year.[1]

Clement was required to make the usual philosophical studies, which in those days consisted of a course extending over three years. A concession was made, however, in favor of those who intended Theology, as after two years they were readily given permission to take the entrance examination prescribed for the students of Theology. Being advanced in years, and filled with a longing for the priesthood, Clement, no doubt, like many others, took advantage of this concession.

The resumption of his studies after so long an interruption was no easy matter, and probably caused him no little hardship. How he managed to keep up with his classes at this time, he himself has told us. Not infrequently he spent the whole night as well as the day in study, overcoming sleep by walking up and down, his text-book in one hand and a lighted candle in the other.

[1] The records of matriculation were kept very carelessly in those days. Poor students, especially, neglected to have their names inscribed on the books, in order to escape the fee charged for making the entry.

As to the subject-matter of his studies at the University, it must be stated that the academic course of Philosophy in those days was not at all similar to the course as now taught. In those days the course of Philosophy corresponded rather to the higher classes in our colleges, and was a preparation for the three departments of Law, Medicine, and Theology. The pedantic methods then employed especially in the schools of Austria, were severely criticized on account of the everlasting weekly and semi-annual examinations which reduced the students almost to despair. Moreover, everything possible was crowded into the philosophical course, so that without any regard to future vocational studies, the students were obliged to attend lectures on Architecture, Hydro-Mechanics, Diplomacy, and Higher Mathematics. Furthermore, it was a constant complaint among the students, that they were treated as mere boys, although, in view of their behavior in the classroom, the majority of them hardly deserved any other treatment. The celebrated philosopher Nicolai, who, in the course of his travels through Lower Germany, in 1781, visited the various colleges of the University of Vienna, describes in the memoirs of his travels what he saw at one of the lectures of Professor Mayer, who taught Logic, Metaphysics, and Applied Philosophy. As in this college the students of Philosophy were obliged to attend all the lectures, Hofbauer was probably present at the scene which Nicolai so graphically describes. According to Nicolai, Professor Mayer "happened at the time to be lecturing on the subject of Punishment, and was explaining with masterful logic that in the economy of God all punishment is intended for the improvement of the delinquent, and that we must hold that such also is the primary purpose of all punishment meted out by the civil authority. This was very reasonable and very clear; yet the greater number of his hearers probably did not grasp it. They showed all the signs of inattention that I had found at other lectures. The Hall of Philosophy is the largest in the college, and the audience is more numerous than at any of the other classes, counting usually about two hundred. But as this class is also the lowest and a mere preparatory class at the University, it was made up for the most part of boys in the early teens. Indeed some

of the students were mere children, and conducted themselves literally as children. Some were sprawling over the benches, others talking, some absently gazing about as children are inclined to do, while still others were actually asleep. And all this was tolerated. Still, to prevent these young lovers of wisdom from becoming too boisterous and disconcerting the professor, there sat, near the rostrum, in a place by himself, an older student, who went by the Latin name of *fiscus philosophiae*, a sort of monitor, who, when the noise became intolerable, would rise and solemnly remind the students of the respect due to the teacher."

Besides Mayer, Hofbauer probably had as professors also the ex-Jesuit Von Herbert in Theoretical and Experimental Physics, and Von Metzberg in Mathematics.

Regarding the moral and religious status of the students of Philosophy, a contemporary observer remarks that in Catholic districts the people as a whole were tolerably well satisfied, as the colleges were for the most part still entrusted to the Religious. "Parents whose sons attended the courses in Philosophy, however, were very much dissatisfied and not a little alarmed, for the general revolt against everything that pertained to the domain of Christian faith was usually set on foot in the schools of Philosophy. Parents therefore feared for their sons until the course in Philosophy had been completed. And indeed they had good reason to be alarmed, as the actual events of the year 1778 were soon to prove. The fact is, that many young men, withdrawn from the care of their parents and subject to receiving very little supervision at the colleges, made shipwreck not only of the faith but of their health as well, and most parents considered themselves fortunate, if their sons passed on to the study of Law without having been drawn into the maelstrom of the general disaster; in the Law Schools order and discipline were better maintained."[2]

Needless to say, Hofbauer, notwithstanding the demands made upon his time by his studies, did not neglect prayer. On Sundays he spent the whole morning in church. While a student at the University, he took special delight in visiting the Church of the Holy Saviour, not far from Maria-Stiegen. This

[2] Beidtel, I. p. 184.

church is to-day in the hands of the Old Catholics. The sexton in charge at that time, testified in later years that he always found Hofbauer eager to serve at the altar, and could rely on him to serve one Mass after the other with the greatest fervor.

It is quite certain that Hofbauer took at least his first year of Theology in Vienna. That year brought him much sorrow. In these our own times, attendance at a University where Theology is taught by seculars, is for many a young man nothing less than a test of faith. Strange as it may seem, in those days, students of Law and Medicine fared far better in this respect than students of Theology. The plan of theological studies, drawn up by the Abbot Stephen Rautenstrauch and introduced in 1774, "was such as eventually to do away with the Catholic system entirely in the dominions of Austria. It was so fundamentally opposed to the Catholic system, and its prescriptions were so radical, that it justified in advance any further and future addition or modification, no matter how un-Catholic or anti-Catholic. Hitherto, all lectures in Theology were required to conform strictly to the program outlined by the Church. This was as it should be, for it was reasonable to subject the training of the clergy to the Church. But since 1774 all this had been changed. Willingly or unwillingly, the student was forced to hear principles enunciated and doctrines propounded which were directly or indirectly opposed to the Church's teaching. All power and authority now rested with the civil authority to the exclusion of the Pope. The Pope or those that stood about his throne were blamed for everything. The disturbances and disorders within the Church, the decay of church discipline, the defection of Catholics to the sects, were all laid to their charge. Moreover, the monastic life, according to the new teachings, was not at all so meritorious as had been imagined for centuries."[3]

But it was in the lectures on Church History, which as a theologian of the first year Hofbauer was obliged to attend, that the Protestant and Jansenistic trend of the times was particularly noticeable. According to Beidtel, "these lectures seemed to be nothing else than one uninterrupted, unwearying denunciation of the Popes and of monastic institutions."[4]

[3] Beidtel, I. p. 119.

[4] Beidtel, p. 119, note 1.

Hofbauer, of course, was too firmly grounded in the principles of his holy faith to be shaken in the beliefs he had cherished from childhood. Hence, even the public attacks on that faith made from the rostrum at the University, cannot have subjected his faith to any sort of trial or temptation. Absolute sincerity, clearness of understanding, and unwavering assurance in matters of faith were so natural to him, that they seem to have been special graces bestowed upon him from the very beginning. Indeed, as he looked back over his life in later years, he was wont to say: "I have no reason to expect from God a reward for my faith, for I have never experienced the slightest temptation against it." But though his faith was put to no test by what he heard in the classroom, one can understand that many of the lectures must have been genuine tests of his patience. During the second year of Theology, for which Hofbauer probably remained at the University, the subjects prescribed were Hermeneutics of the Old and the New Testaments, Pastoral Theology, and the History of Theological Literature. A passage in Werner's well-known poem on Hofbauer tells us that while at Vienna Clement devoted himself with special predilection to the writings of St. Ambrose.[5]

Of more vital interest and of greater importance in view of the future career of Hofbauer, however, is the fact that during this time he became acquainted with the writings of St. Alphonsus Maria de Liguori. Liguori's ascetical works especially, in their German version, had a wide circulation in those days and enjoyed great favor. Indeed the writings of this Saint were in such demand that publishers falsely attributed certain works to him, in order to secure for them a greater sale.

Deep, lively faith and tender piety pervade the writings of St. Alphonsus. Some of them have achieved a world-wide popularity. Among these latter are his *Visits to the Blessed Sacrament,* and his *Way of the Cross.* In those days especially, when Jansenism and Rationalism left their blight on all ascetical literature and made the spiritual life unattractive, the writings of Liguori worked wonders among the faithful. For thousands they became guides in the spiritual life. The flavor of these works was very much to the taste of Hofbauer.

[5] Brunner, *Hofbauer,* p. 301.

Thus it was, that long before he had any knowledge of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer founded by Alphonsus in the kingdom of Naples, in the year 1732, with the destinies of which his later years were to be bound up, and in the diffusion of which he was destined to take so active a part, Clement had conceived a great admiration for the retired Bishop of St. Agatha of the Goths, and cherished a great love for the saintly and renowned author.[6]

Other events which Hofbauer as student witnessed during these years in Vienna are a part of history. We all know what sorrow and suffering the period extending from 1780 to 1784 brought to the Church in Austria. Undoubtedly, while still an academician Hofbauer shared the general mourning that wrung the heart of Austria at the death and burial of the great Queen Maria Theresa (November 29 and December 2, 1780). Joseph II had now a free hand, and the work of reform, until then held in check by the restraining influence of the Queen, shot forward with redoubled speed. The vast number of these so-called ecclesiastical reforms became effective precisely during Hofbauer's student years. Like a destructive hail-storm the Reform swept down upon the fair fields of the Church in Austria. Countless imperial decrees went forth, strangling Catholic life, throttling all devotion, and arresting all progress in matters spiritual. In Vienna alone thirteen convents heard their death-knell sounded.

The great mass of the people, however, remained for a time unaffected by the new ideas and tendencies. This was clearly seen on the occasion of the visit of Pius VI to Vienna. Sad as was the motive that inspired this extraordinary journey of the Pope, the touching and manifest proofs of loyalty and affection which the Pontiff received from the common people were for many a source of no little consolation and encouragement.

On March 22, 1782, Pope Pius VI made his entry into Vienna. The Emperor and his brother Max had proceeded as far as Vienna-Neustadt to meet and welcome him. The roads

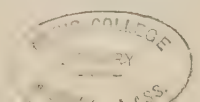
[6] That Hofbauer before his entrance into the Congregation was acquainted with the writings of St. Alphonsus, is clear from Father Tannoja's *Life of St. Alphonsus.* (III. 1, 4, Chapter 29.)

and streets through which the Papal cortège passed were lined with the faithful. On Easter Sunday His Holiness celebrated Pontifical High Mass in the Cathedral of St. Stephen's; later he imparted the Papal Blessing from the balcony of the Church at Court. An immense multitude filled the plaza. A volley of cannon announced to those who were not present the precise moment of the Blessing.

On April 22, Pius left Vienna. The chronicler of the Convent of St. Ursula's in Vienna, in recording this event, writes as follows: "The presence of His Holiness wrought much good among the people and so moved their hearts to amend their lives, that many who had not approached the Holy Sacraments for twenty or thirty years were reconciled to God by a sincere confession of their sins, and thereafter led very fervent and edifying lives."

No such change of heart, however, was produced in the Emperor. The reforms continued, and the keenest observers of the times could perceive that the Reform Party was gaining influence with alarming rapidity, even among the masses. Gebler, a member of the Privy Council, on November 16, 1783, wrote to the infidel philosopher Nicolai at Berlin: "It must be evident to every philosophical mind that no period of history is more remarkable than that which began in the year 1781. So sudden a change in the general trend of thought affecting even the common people, is to my knowledge without a parallel in history."[7] The opposition of the clergy and of those who remained faithful to the Church was not sufficient to avert the impending disaster. The written protests of the Cardinal Prince-Archbishop Migazzi were almost equally unavailing. The ex-Jesuits and the Mendicants, who were still the ablest pulpit-orators, left nothing undone to arouse and enlighten the people. The Emperor, it was known, was not very sensitive to open criticism of his policies. And indeed it was not at all necessary that he should be, when the Reform Party itself took up the cudgels in his defense. To cope with the fearless denunciations of the Catholic clergy and pulpit-orators

[7] From *Josephist Vienna. The Correspondence of Gebler and Nicolai during the years 1771–1786.* Published and annotated by Dr. Richard Maria Werner, Berlin, 1888, p. 112.



there appeared, in 1781, a new weekly paper entitled *Weekly Truths For and About the Preachers of Vienna.* Every Thursday the sermons that had been preached were picked to pieces and held up to ridicule in this vile sheet, and their text interpreted according to the sense of the Reformers. The publishers of this paper were young people without theological training; and the sole aim and purpose of their literary endeavors was to condemn, vilify, and caricature every sermon that ventured to proclaim genuinely Catholic doctrine. And yet this new venture in journalism was hailed by the Provost Mark Anthony Wittola as a work inspired by Divine Providence! This "Catholic" clergyman, "the foremost Reformer among the clergy of Austria," as Sebastian Brunner has styled him, is a typical representative of the many clergymen of that period of the Reform, who, while possessing unquestionably high mental endowments, like Wessenberg, prostituted their sacred calling by subscribing to the most monstrous and extravagant views and principles concerning the Church and her age-old practices. As we shall see farther on, Hofbauer himself was to learn on one occasion how deeply and how heartlessly Wittola could dip his pen in gall and venom. The number of pamphlets published against the Church in Vienna at that time is beyond all reckoning. We mention but one — the *Monachologia* of the Councilor and Freemason Born, which was served up to the public during Hofbauer's last year at the University. Born was the most gifted of the whole army of pamphleteers. He surpassed all the rest in wit and satire as well as in malice and mendacity. Written after the manner of a Natural History, the *Monachologia* compares the numerous Orders of monks to the various classes of beasts that inhabit the earth, and so holds them up to ridicule. It was the most offensive caricature of Catholic monasticism since the appearance of the *Dunkelmaenner-Briefen* of the sixteenth century. In spite of Migazzi's spirited protest the infamous work was approved by the censors and thousands of copies were printed and distributed.

All these events could not have left our student unimpressed or unmoved. He was in the prime of manhood and accustomed, as he himself tells us, to take particular notice of the

moral and religious conditions around him. It is to be regretted that not a single letter written by him during those years has come down to us. It would be interesting now to read the accounts which he sent to his good and pious old mother at Tasswitz of all that he was obliged to see and hear in Vienna. An incident that took place at this time, however, reveals the strain under which he must have been laboring. On one occasion the tension reached the breaking-point in the lecture-hall at the University. A painful scene ensued. He arose in his place and interrupted the professor in the course of the lecture. "What you say, Professor," he cried out, "is not Catholic doctrine"; and taking up his hat he left the room. The sequel to this occurrence came some years later when Hofbauer, now a Redemptorist, met this same Professor in the streets of the city. The Professor recognized his one-time pupil at once, and stopped to thank him, saying, that though the public rebuke had been very embarrassing, it had nevertheless proved very salutary. The incident reveals the state of mind of many of the students and professors of that stormy epoch. Among these, no doubt, there were many that fell in with the Reform, not because in their hearts they assented to the strange new tenets, but because it was the fashion, or from weakness and fear of conflict — because it was less troublesome to acquiesce than to do battle for the right. With them, it was a question of expediency rather than of propriety and conviction. Like the professor whom Clement so fearlessly called to account for his un-Catholic statements, all that most of these persons needed was a stern reminder that they were treading very near the edge of heresy, and once aware of their danger, they fled back in terror, took refuge under the shelter of the old Church, and thankfully clasped the old teachings of Catholic Faith to their souls. How many did not Hofbauer in later years arouse from their lethargy! How many did he not free from the shackles of human respect! Even as a simple academician, he had begun this work of rebuilding the solid structure of faith in the souls of men.

Our information regarding Hofbauer's relations with his fellow-students and with others during the years he spent at the

University, is unfortunately very meager. His friendship with two men who were destined to play important parts in his later life, undoubtedly dates from these years. He made the acquaintance of both these men in a very singular way. One day, as he was reading the notices on the bulletin-board at St. Stephen's, he saw there an advertisement for students to do clerical work. Applying for the situation, he met Baron von Penckler. The latter was the son of the renowned Austrian diplomat who had been Ambassador to Turkey during the troublesome times of Maria Theresa, and who, in recognition for his services, had been created a Baron of the Empire by the Empress. The younger Penckler, who was born in the same year as Hofbauer, entered the diplomatic service at a very early age. Simultaneously he devoted himself to higher studies, and when only sixteen years of age, published a treatise on the Shepherd Poem. In his search for copyists to assist him in his literary labors, he was brought into contact with Hofbauer; but in the designs of God, Hofbauer was to do more for him than merely act as a salaried secretary. Penckler, a student of the Jesuits, was a staunch Catholic, who considered it a sacred duty to combat the irreligious tendencies of the times. The restoration of the suppressed Society of Jesus occupied the first place in his thoughts and was the chief aim of all his life.

On another occasion the same bulletin-board announced a poor student's desire to do clerical work during his leisure hours. Hofbauer himself was dependent on the charity of others, but some sudden impulse urged him to seek out the applicant. The result was that he came to know Thaddeus Huebl. Huebl, a gifted young man of most charming personality and high character, was very poor. He was a native of Bohemia and ten years younger than Hofbauer. Their first meeting laid the foundation of a staunch, lifelong friendship. Forgetting his own want in his desire to be of assistance to Huebl, Hofbauer commended his new friend to the charity of his own benefactors, who began at once to take a warm interest in him.

Thus did Divine Providence lead to the Saint, in Huebl and Penckler, the men who were to be the staunchest supporters of

his life's work. From this period, too, dates, in all probability, his acquaintance with Francis Seraphicus Schmid, a near relative of Master Weyrig's. When Hofbauer began his studies, Schmid, a delicate but very exemplary young man, entered the Franciscan monastery in Vienna. It was probably at some time during these years, too, that Clement's old friend Kunzmann reappeared upon the scene. Kunzmann had remained at Tivoli for three years; where he settled after that is not certain, though it is well known that he resumed his former trade.

We must not imagine, however, that Hofbauer and Huebl, with their strictly Catholic views, were the rare exceptions among the students of those days. Thirty years later, when the Catholic students of the University began to gather about Hofbauer in Vienna, they were, it is true, in the great minority. During the reign of Joseph II, when the civil power had but just begun to invade the precincts of the Church, conditions were unquestionably much better. Worthy of special note is the fact, vouched for by Hofbauer himself, that in his time many students of the University of Vienna took advantage of the long fall vacation to make a pilgrimage to Rome, remaining there for two or three weeks. Sometimes these pilgrimages took on vast proportions; as a rule, however, these students traveled in small groups. We have authentic information proving that Hofbauer went to Rome every year during the holidays. And no doubt Tivoli, always a cherished, tender memory, was revisited every year before he set out on the homeward journey.

The scholastic year at that time began on the 4th of November and closed on the last day of August. Hofbauer always made the journey to Rome on foot. A few florins sufficed for his traveling expenses; for the most part he depended on alms. Rarely did he have any shelter during the night: his bed was usually the bare ground and his canopy the clear sky overhead. He was not concerned for his safety or his health on these occasions. He would describe a circle on the ground, which he placed under the protection of the Prince of the Apostles, and then quite contentedly lay himself down to rest within its enclosure. Despite the fact that

autumn was setting in, the heat was at times so excessive that in the morning he was literally bathed in perspiration.

Not always, however, were these journeys without all adventure. Once, in the vicinity of Gemona, he and Huebl were attacked by a ferocious dog. Huebl especially seemed to arouse the fury of the beast. At this, Hofbauer intoned the Psalm, "*Qui habitat in adjutorio Altissimi,*" and when the beast thereupon turned tail and scampered off, he remarked to Huebl, not yet recovered from his fright: "My mother taught me to recite that Psalm in time of danger or attack."

Another experience just outside the city of Rome threatened to result far more seriously. This time Kunzmann was with them. Night had overtaken them, and they sought shelter in a lonely and secluded inn. Here they soon began to feel very uneasy; and their alarm increased when they noticed the inn-keeper, a very savage-looking fellow, engaged in mysterious conversation with his friends. Huebl and Kunzmann declared emphatically that they would not remain. Hofbauer sent them away, directing them to a little hill not far distant. After they had left, he paid the bill, saying that he intended to proceed on his journey. The inn-keeper tried to hold him back by force; but Hofbauer broke away from the fiend and dashed out into the night to join his companions. The three wanderers went into hiding and awaited developments. One can imagine their terror, when they saw several men come out of the inn with lanterns and large dogs, whose barking re-echoed down the valley as they disappeared in the direction of Rome. After the bandits had returned from their fruitless chase and everything was quiet again, the three pilgrims commended themselves to the Lord and continued on their journey.

In his old age Hofbauer related to his friend Klinkowstroem yet another but more mysterious experience. Late one evening he and Huebl espied in the distance what appeared to be a brightly illuminated house. Rejoicing at the prospect of finding a good lodging for the night, they hurried their pace to reach the spot. As they approached they distinguished strains of music and loud noises issuing from the house, which convinced them that the place was really a public inn. But scarcely had they crossed the threshold, when they found

themselves in utter darkness. The house was empty and the silence was ominous. To their minds nothing but the influence of the evil spirits could account for so strange an occurrence, and so, hastening from the spot, they continued their wanderings through the night. Klinkowstroem has supplemented his account of this incident with the remark, that "even as young men their hidden sanctity seemed sufficient to disarm the power of the evil spirits."

It is certain that Hofbauer thus visited Rome in the fall of 1782, and of 1783; that he did so in 1781 is not so certain.

Meager as are the known particulars of these years of Hofbauer's student-life, we know that this was the period of his greatest spiritual development. He saw and learned a great deal in those years. We must look to this period for the beginning of that outspoken pessimism which colored all his letters and conversations when in later years he referred to the ecclesiastical and religious conditions of his times. If in our own day we are inclined to view far more serious conditions with greater calm and to adjudge them more leniently, it is due chiefly to the fact that our generation has long since accustomed itself to such scenes of spiritual desolation, as it has grown up in the very midst of them. Hofbauer, on the contrary, lived in a period of transition. The good old Catholic times were part and parcel of his boyhood and early youth. Consequently, when the New Reform, that abortive product of enlightened Rationalism, Gallicanism, Jansenism, State Supremacy and Freemasonry, burst upon the astonished world, and Divine Providence led him to Vienna, the great center of this spiritual revolt, he must have experienced a shock from which he could never quite recover. What a contrast between the deeply religious home of his parents in Tasswitz and the quiet hermitage at Tivoli within the shadow of St. Peter's dome, on the one hand, and the University of Vienna, in 1785, on the other! He saw a new era unfolding before him, and as he gazed he read but too well the signs of the times.

But while these were very instructive years for him, they must at the same time have been very painful and distressing. The sight of the Church despoiled of its rights and captive in the bonds of imperialism, might even have affected the

physical health of one so deeply imbued with religious faith, divine love, and tender charity toward his neighbor. The joy of finally reaching the goal of his ambition, the priesthood, was robbed of much of its sweetness. Neither as a secular priest nor as a religious could he count upon a future that would correspond to his ideals in that fatherland which was so dear to him. His friend Schmid, on the advice of his superiors, had left the Franciscan Order shortly after entering. Hofbauer himself began to consider the advisability of escaping from the soul-harrowing scenes around him by leaving Vienna and continuing his studies abroad. A number of imperial ordinances with regard to studies were published, and seeing in them a real menace to his plans for the future, he realized that the time had come for decisive action.

On March 30, 1783, it was officially decreed that the education and training of both the secular and the regular clergy must thenceforth be received in the General Seminaries of the State. The same decree extended the Theological course to six years. Thereafter the Religious Orders were forbidden to receive within their ranks, and the Bishops were denied the right to ordain, any one who had not spent six years in the General Seminary. Furthermore, even after completing their studies in the General Seminary, all candidates for the priesthood were required to spend one or two years in the residence of the Bishop before being admitted to ordination. Consoling prospects, indeed, for one who at the age of thirty had completed only his first year in Theology! It was found necessary, later on, to shorten the years of study on account of the dearth of priests, which was one of the first bitter fruits of the Josephist System. In the meantime, however, Hofbauer had to face the fact that he would be forty years old before reaching the priesthood. The following year brought another innovation, the introduction of the college-fee, exemption from which could be procured only with great difficulty, and which therefore proved a genuine hardship for students who depended on charity. In the light of these facts, we can readily understand why Hofbauer decided to leave the University of Vienna.

In the fall of 1784, he made preparations for the customary pilgrimage to Rome. This time, however, he seriously con-

sidered the project of continuing his studies, if possible, in the Eternal City. Whether or not the question of becoming a Religious Priest occurred to him at this time, is uncertain. His intention of completing his studies in Rome, however, presupposes his resolution to enter some Order, as in Rome scarcely any other road to the priesthood was open to him. In the Eternal City, with its numerous convents, he had a splendid opportunity for selection. There, under the direct supervision of the Vicar of Christ, no Order was hampered in the observance of its Rule. That Hofbauer was not the only one to conceive the plan of completing his seminary training beyond the confines of Austria, is seen from the publication of the so-called Emigration Patent of Joseph II. This document, dated August 10, 1784, threatened with the severest penalties all who entered a convent outside the limits of the Empire. It seems that on account of the laws regulating the convents in Austria, there was a great exodus of students and seminarians to Rome, and most of these were candidates aspiring to the Religious Orders.

Hofbauer acquainted his friend Huebl with his new plans, and urged him likewise to leave Vienna. Huebl was not a little surprised at this sudden invitation. Besides being of a naturally timid disposition, he was ill in a hospital at the time, and entirely without the funds for such a journey. Consequently, the proposition was unthinkable. But Hofbauer insisted, and overruled every excuse or objection. He himself would provide the money for the journey, and as for Huebl's health, he declared that God would take care of that. And so, in fact, it happened. Huebl's recovery from his illness was so rapid, that, in September, 1784, he and Hofbauer began their journey over the Alps toward the South. The future, however, was shrouded in mystery, and their prospects were in the hands of God.

CHAPTER IV

IN ITALY (1784–1785) — ENTRANCE INTO THE CONGREGATION OF THE MOST HOLY REDEEMER — ORDINATION TO THE PRIESTHOOD

A MATTER of very grave consequence now engaged the attention of the two Viennese students in Rome. Hofbauer visited the various monasteries, making inquiries about their rule of life, and taking particular notice of the regular observance in each. At length he came in contact with the Redemptorists, who in the preceding year had established a small foundation at San Giuliano on the Esquiline, near the Church of Santa Maria Maggiore. It was their first foundation in the city of Rome. The poor little convent of the new Congregation was almost lost among the many more pretentious ones in the city. Humanly speaking, it was mere chance that led the two itinerant students to San Giuliano. Hofbauer in later years took special delight in telling this story of his vocation, for he saw in it a special act of Divine Providence.

The lodging of the two Roman pilgrims was situated in the neighborhood of Santa Maria Maggiore. One evening they agreed to perform their customary devotions the following morning in the church whose bells should be the first to greet them upon awaking. Very early the next morning the clear soft tones of a little bell rang out upon the air and led them to the devotional little church of San Giuliano not far away. They soon perceived that it was a convent-church, for the Religious were just making their morning meditation. Hofbauer was deeply impressed by what little he could observe. On leaving the church, he asked an altar-boy what sort of religious these priests were. "They are Redemptorists," replied the lad, "and some day you, too, will be one of them." Perhaps the boy's answer was intended only as a joke, but Hofbauer regarded the unusual reply as a call from God. Act-

ing on this belief, he and Huebl presented themselves at the convent and requested an interview with the Superior. They were told to return on the following day.

The Superior who received the two Germans on the morrow was the aged Father Landi, one of the first companions of the saintly founder, Alphonsus Maria de Liguori. He was quite brief with them. In a few words he acquainted them with some of the more important rules of the Congregation, and told them that if they were so minded, they might enter at once. In fact, he actually invited them to do so, and placed before them the forms of application for admission, to which they were to affix their signatures.

Hofbauer did not even pause to reconsider the matter. As if it were a mere matter of course, Hofbauer took the most important step of his life. Without a moment's hesitation and without further inquiry, he reached for the pen and signed his name. Huebl, however, did not follow his example. Things were moving entirely too rapidly for him. The sudden resolution of his friend astounded him, and he set it down as the sheerest folly. But he smothered his indignation until they had left the convent. Once out on the street, he gave free vent to his feelings. Hofbauer had a hard time of it. Huebl loaded him with complaints and reproaches: " How could he, a stranger in a strange land, venture to enter an Order whose Rules he did not even know; how could he thus abandon him and force him to return home alone, and that, too, without money " ! To emphasize his displeasure, he would not walk at Hofbauer's side, but followed a few steps behind, grumbling and snarling to show his utter disgust. In vain did Hofbauer try to pacify him and induce him to remain. At last, he remarked very coolly: " Well, if you are determined to return home, in God's name go! " Deep in his heart, however, he had very different sentiments. The fact is, he had not reckoned on encountering any opposition from Huebl, and the latter's failure to concur with his plans placed him in a very painful predicament. He was left to choose between canceling his application for admission and postponing his entrance into the Congregation indefinitely, or leaving to his own resources the friend whom he had persuaded to accompany him

to Rome. There were difficulties either way, and he knew not what to do. And so, the rest of the day was passed under a cloud. Both maintained a sullen silence, and the tension was appalling. When evening was come, Huebl went to bed, but Hofbauer spent the night in fervent prayer. Morning dawned. The two friends arose, and, still sullen and silent, proceeded to Santa Maria Maggiore. On the way Huebl suddenly turned to Hofbauer and gaily inquired, "Do you know the news?" "Yes," replied Hofbauer in a tone of quiet confidence; "you are going to remain and enter the Congregation with me." He had divined the truth: both went to San Giuliano and there entered the Novitiate.

A contemporary, the Redemptorist Father Tannoja, in his *Life* of the Founder, has pointed out what was probably the real reason that prompted Hofbauer to look with favor on the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer, and finally induced him to join the ranks of its members. "It was," he writes, "the good example of our brethren, and especially the great renown which the Founder of our Congregation, Monsignor Liguori, enjoyed in Germany on account of his great sanctity and learning." The motives that led Father Landi to admit the two Germans are not so clear. In those days a patrimony of at least one hundred scudi was required of the candidate, since the members of the Congregation were ordained under the title of their patrimony, and the various foundations of the Congregation were very poor. Many a student was obliged to turn away because no exception was made to this rule. For Hofbauer and Huebl insistence on a patrimony would have been paramount to a refusal. But in their case, the question of money was never discussed. Moreover, so far as we are able to ascertain, they were the first foreigners that were admitted into the hitherto purely Neapolitan Congregation. Did Father Landi, perhaps, in that light that is given from on high to spiritual men, discern the hidden worth of the young man who stood before him, and so hasten to win him for the Congregation?

The new postulant usually retains his secular garb for a short while in the House of the Novitiate, and then prepares himself by a Retreat of fifteen days for the reception of the

Habit. Our two German candidates received the religious Habit from the hands of Father Landi, the Master of Novices, on October 24, 1784, and from that date the term of their probation began.

Father Landi was a man eminently qualified not only to initiate the Novices into the life and spirit of the Congregation, but also to fill them with love and reverence for the venerable Founder. Nearly forty years had elapsed since he himself made his religious profession in the presence of Liguori, and for thirty years he had been his main support and the daily witness of his virtues. Fully conversant with the history of the Congregation from its inception, and intimately associated with its holy Founder, he had recently written a history of the Congregation and its Founder. This work was completed shortly before Hofbauer and Huebl entered the Novitiate. Hofbauer never had the privilege and happiness of seeing the Founder of the Congregation. It was in the school of Landi, a first disciple of Liguori's, that were awakened in his heart that great reverence for Alphonsus and that enthusiastic love for the poor and insignificant Congregation which characterized his whole religious life, and which lifted him victoriously over the many severe trials and dangers that bore in upon his vocation later on.

The daily life of the novitiate, with its strict silence, its numerous exercises of prayer and works of penance, was not new or difficult to the former hermit of Tivoli. His difficulties were of quite another nature. The Italians were not devout enough, according to his way of thinking. This is the impression which he formed during those days of his novitiate, and throughout the rest of his life he could not be disabused of this conviction. And he did not hesitate, in his own ingenuous and inoffensive way, to tell his new Italian confrères that the Italians were poor models for imitation. "Foreigners expect all Italians to be saints," he would say; "they observe and examine everything you Italians do, and on returning home they relate what they have seen and heard." The novices at San Giuliano, as a consequence, found it no easy task to live up to the high ideals of their German companions. This they came to realize during the very first days of the

novitiate. It was their custom during the hot weather to take a change of linen with them on their walks — a strange and unnecessary procedure, in the opinion of the hardened and mortified Hofbauer. On one occasion, when the novices were getting ready for an ordinary walk, one might have imagined from the elaborate preparations, that they were setting out on a long journey. Hofbauer could no longer master his feelings. "Your Reverence," he blurted out to the Master of Novices, "just as I stand before you, with one shirt, with one coat, with these trousers, this one hat and cane I traveled on foot all the way from Vienna to Rome without the least injury to my health. The journey took me over four hundred hours; and here such extraordinary preparations are made for a walk of two hours." From that time the changing of linen on their walks ceased.

Hofbauer found it difficult, however, to keep pace with the Italians in fasting. Robust and well-built, he had brought with him from across the Alps a good German appetite, for which the frugal Italian fare of the poor little convent was wholly inadequate. "My greatest trial," he declared in after years, "was my insatiable appetite. During that time I always felt hungry." His worst fault in the novitiate was, that on one occasion, contrary to the Rule, he took some grapes without permission. Outside the little window of his cell just within reach, there was a grape-vine, and at the time of the vintage he had to do violence to himself not to stretch forth his hand to pluck the luscious, tempting fruit. But in spite of the hardship of fasting, he observed the fasts most conscientiously, making a virtue of necessity by offering the mortification it entailed in thanksgiving to God for the grace of vocation granted to his friend Huebl. Moreover, he remained faithful to the practice, adopted in childhood, of abstaining from wine — no slight act of mortification when one remembers that in the wine-producing districts of the South, wine was the ordinary beverage at table, even in the poorest convents.

According to his own statement, these few months of his novitiate were the happiest of Hofbauer's life. The traditional maxim of the Congregation, that "a Redemptorist must be a Carthusian at home and an Apostle abroad," harmonized per-

fectly with the dearest aspirations of his soul. He felt that he had found his proper place at last. The attraction to a life of solitude, on the one hand, and the longing for an active life, on the other, had hitherto been in constant conflict within him: the Carthusian within his soul had led him to the hermit's cell, and as constantly the Apostle within that same soul had urged him forth again. The Rule of his Congregation agreeably combined the character and mission of the contemplative and of the active life. As a natural consequence he became a Redemptorist in the fullest and truest sense, and such he remained. All the powers of his irrepressible nature were thenceforth consecrated to the welfare of the Congregation, and all that he did or attempted in its behalf was inspired, not so much by the obligations he had assumed, as by his own personal zeal and fervor.

Even in the days of his novitiate his apostolic zeal manifested itself. Scarcely had he entered the Congregation when he began to dream of carrying the work of Alphonsus de Liguori beyond the confines of Italy into his own fatherland. With the ardor and enthusiasm of youth, which leaps over all obstacles, the two Germans seriously discussed the project of establishing a foundation in Vienna. At that time no one, of course, could foresee that the Josephist State Church System was not a mushroom growth fated to perish as quickly as it had sprang up, but a mighty tree of deadly fruit destined to stand until, after decades of years, the earthquake of revolution should root it up and sweep it from the face of the earth.

The year of the novitiate prescribed by the Rule was considerably shortened for the two Germans. On March 19, 1785, the feast of St. Joseph and eve of Palm Sunday, Hofbauer and Huebl pronounced the holy vows of religion in the presence of Father de Paola. Thereupon they betook themselves at once to the House of Studies in Frosinone, a small town in the southern part of the Papal States, near the Neapolitan border. In the same month, probably on March 29, ten days after their Religious Profession, they were ordained Priests, — according to tradition, in the episcopal city of Alatri, not far from Frosinone. Their journey back to Frosinone was made in a pouring rain. On their return home an unex-

pected distinction was accorded the new Levites. Among other acts of humility practised in the Congregation custom prescribes that one of the Fathers shall read while another serves at table. The Superior of Frosinone must have entertained a very high opinion of the virtue of the newly-ordained priests, for he had appointed the one to serve and the other to read at table! With quaint humor Hofbauer used to relate in after years, how disappointed they both were, when, contrary to their expectations, the table on the days of their ordination and their First Holy Mass was no better than on other days. The meal was as frugal as ever. Not long, therefore, did the scant portion of meat on Huebl's plate survive his appearance at table.

Father Hofbauer, as for the first time we may now call him, felt on the day of his ordination like one who, after many wanderings and journeyings, had at last reached his long-coveted goal. With something like a sigh of infinite relief and inexpressible gratitude, he looked back over the past. The chief consolation accorded him was that his dear old mother lived to see the great day of her son. A short time after, she was laid to rest in far-off Tasswitz. Beyond that, it had been a hard, long, devious road over which Divine Providence had led her cherished John. Father Hofbauer was just rounding out his thirty-fourth year when, as a Priest of the Most High, he ascended the altar-steps for the first time. Exactly one half of the years allotted him for his life's work had been consumed in attaining the object of his desire.

The two German Redemptorists spent the next six months at Frosinone finishing their theological studies. In the fall Father de Paola, the Superior General, called them to Rome. Their plan of seeking a field of labor in Austria was now to be seriously considered.

The seemingly reckless decision of the Superior General to send these two new and inexperienced subjects to a country where the Congregation was not known even by name, may be understood, when we consider conditions within the Congregation at that time.

If there was anything that marred Hofbauer's happiness in the beginning of his religious life, it was the trials of the Con-

gregation. He soon perceived that the State Church System held the reigns of high command not only in Austria, but in Italy as well. With no little surprise he was soon to learn that Alphonsus de Liguori, whom he revered so highly, was not only not his Superior, but that the saintly Founder and the other Fathers of the Neapolitan Houses no longer belonged to the Congregation as approved by the Church. A short digression will be necessary here in order to explain how all this came about.

Alphonsus de Liguori founded his Congregation of Missionary Priests, in 1732, with a view chiefly to the needs of the Kingdom of Naples. In no way did he absolutely exclude the idea of subsequently extending the Congregation beyond the Kingdom; yet, so far as we can learn, such a development of the work he had started was far from his mind at the outset. It was a matter of vital importance, therefore, to obtain, besides the approbation of the Church, the approbation of the Neapolitan Government. Pope Benedict XIV had approved and canonically established the new Congregation in the year 1749. The Government of Naples, however, professed to see all sorts of objections to the approbation of the new Institute. Tannucci, the Prime Minister, one of the strongest protagonists of the State Church System in the eighteenth century, was all-powerful, and every attempt of Alphonsus to secure the Royal *Exequatur* for the Brief of Pope Benedict was fruitless. And yet, the Pope himself had written to the Founder that the approval of the Church would be of no permanent value to the Congregation without the approbation of the State. King Charles III, of Naples, out of regard for Monsignor Liguori, looked with favor upon the new Institute. Its primary object was to labor for the poor and abandoned people in the country-districts, and this alone was sufficient to enlist the King's sympathy. It was owing solely to this favorable disposition on the part of the King that the four foundations in the Kingdom of Naples were tolerated as separate entities. In reality, however, these four houses formed a uniform whole, subject to and governed by the same authority, a situation which in itself placed the Congregation in an illegal position. This was the vulnerable side upon which the Missionaries could be at-

tacked at any time by their enemies. And these were by no means lacking.

This unsettled condition of affairs, naturally, could not last without seriously affecting the discipline of the Institute and the spirit of the members. In 1779, therefore, two of his Consultors, Fathers Majone and Cimino, laid before the Founder a plan by which only the Rule, without the Papal Brief, would be presented for approbation to the Government. The Neapolitan Minister of Worship assured them of the success of this plan, provided the text of the Rule were found to accord with the views of the Government. Alphonsus, weighed down with years and almost blind, consented to this proposition, but hoped that it would suffice to omit from the text of the Rule merely the chapter regulating the income of the houses, since, in the eyes of the State, this was the most offensive part of the Rule. As for the rest of the Rule, the Consultors were to make no changes that would encroach upon or endanger the spirit of the Institute. This injunction they promised to observe most faithfully, but they broke their solemn promise, and deceived Alphonsus in a manner passing all comprehension. The Rule was completely revised to make it palatable to the Government's taste. Naturally, to ensure this result, so many changes were found necessary, even in points vital to the Institute, that the revised text became, in fact, an entirely new Rule. By virtue of the *Regolamento,* as this draft of the Rule was called, the Congregation ceased to be an ecclesiastical corporate body under the jurisdiction of the Holy See, and became a mere civil institution, hardly more than a society of laymen, a monstrosity, as Father Tannoja calls it, without even the semblance of what Alphonsus intended the Congregation to be. The revisors, enjoying Liguori's fullest confidence, succeeded without opposition in placing this counterfeit of the Rule before the Government. The Government, in its turn, was so pleased with the forgery, that it hastened, on January 22, 1780, to approve it, and at once literally forced its acceptance on the various foundations of the Institute.

The publication of the *Regolamento* prostrated Alphonsus with grief, and the whole Congregation rose up in arms

against it. A few of the members, with Majone and Cimino at their head, agitated for the unconditional acceptance of the *Regolamento*. The rest were divided in opinion as to the course to be followed, and as a consequence two parties were formed. In the Neapolitan Houses the belief that it was best to yield to necessity and accept the *Regolamento* with reservations, gradually gained ground; but the King was to be petitioned to consent subsequently to the deletion of at least the more objectionable innovations from the text of the Rule. Alphonsus himself was inclined to think that this was now the only way to save his Congregation from immediate suppression.

The other party, made up mostly of the Fathers in the Papal States, was determined under no consideration or condition to recognize the Rule approved by the Government. The leaders of this party were Fathers Francis de Paola and Isidore Leggio, and the subsequent events of the Institute revolve about these two men.

Father de Paola deserves considerable credit for the establishment of the Congregation in the Papal States.[1] Through his efforts a foundation was made in Scifelli, in 1773, and another in Frosinone, in 1776. De Paola is described by his contemporaries as a man of untiring energy and apostolic zeal, possessing both great learning and undoubted virtue. Still his character was not without blemish. He was accused of being too ambitious of power. The gifted but impetuous Father Leggio exercised a strong influence over him. Both had for some time opposed the form of government of the Congregation, so far as to question its legality. Even before the open rupture caused by the *Regolamento,* they are said to have entertained thoughts of a separation. Be that as it may, the appearance of that ill-fated document was a torch applied to their inflammable spirits. Scarcely had they read the *Regolamento,* when, without awaiting further developments, they

[1] He was born in 1737, and died in 1814. For further particulars see Dilgskron, *Life of St. Alphonsus,* II. p. 336, and *Letters of St. Alphonsus,* Vol. II., part I. p. 227. Alphonsus considered him one of his ablest Fathers. Whether Father Dilgskron's predominantly unfavorable judgment of Paola is not influenced too much by the accounts furnished by his Neapolitan opponents, might be a matter of further discussion.

denounced it at Rome, and demanded self-government according to the original Rule for the Houses in the Papal States. Their petition was very readily and very willingly granted. Rome itself was indignant over the surrender of the Rule of the Congregation into the hands of the civil authorities. Even Liguori fell into disfavor with Pope Pius VI, until that Pontiff had convinced himself of the entire innocence of the venerable Founder. Of the approbation of the *Regolamento* by the Church there could, of course, be no question. The encroachments of the Neapolitan Government upon ecclesiastical rights had become more and more provoking, so that for political reasons alone Rome was obliged to stand firm and give no quarter. Thus it was that in September, 1780, the Congregation in Naples was declared canonically suppressed, and in August of the following year the separation of the Houses in the Papal States from those in the Kingdom of Naples became effective by a special decree. Thenceforth, the Houses in the Papal States, with Father de Paola as Superior General, constituted the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer. The Neapolitan Houses were left to their fate. The Mission-Faculties, which until now had contributed so largely to the success of the missionaries, were withdrawn, seriously crippling the work of the popular missions in the Kingdom of Naples. Worse than all else, Alphonsus suffered the humiliation of seeing himself excluded from the very Congregation which he himself had founded and which he had directed and governed in the face of untold difficulties for half a century.

Father de Paola now began to display great activity in spreading the Congregation and in securing for it new fields of labor. In rapid succession four new foundations were accepted, in Spello, in Gubbio, in Rome, and in Cisterna. For years Father de Paola had contended and toiled for a foundation in Rome. His dreams were realized on March 22, 1783, when San Giuliano was established. On December 17, 1785, this house was chosen as the residence of the Superior General. Hofbauer and Huebl were in the novitiate at the time.

Dark as these events were for the Congregation at the time, we who view them in the retrospect must admit that they con-

cealed in their shadows certain benefits of great consequence. Precisely because of the situation created by the *Regolamento,* the Congregation was forced to look beyond the narrow confines of the mother-country for the pledge of its own preservation and the promise of its future growth. The work of Alphonsus de Liguori has endured to our own day.

This expansive policy is not natural to the Italians, and least of all to the Neapolitans. Consequently, the Congregation would probably have continued to be restricted to the country which gave it birth, and, in that event, it is doubtful whether it would have endured to the present day. The *Regolamento,* with all its immediate and subsequent results, was a crushing blow for the venerable Founder; but in the infinite designs of Heaven it was the price that purchased freedom and permanence for the child of his heart.

The experiences with the Neapolitan Government proved very conclusively that an ecclesiastical society with a world-wide aim could not remain forever dependent on a single small State for its prosperity or decay. Liguori clearly foresaw the consequence of such a condition, although he was wont to put great stress upon the indigenous character of his Congregation. In 1776, he wrote confidentially to one of the members: "My dear Father, the Houses in Naples help us little or not at all to establish the Congregation, because they do not form a body, and are exposed to every wind that blows. For the present we must fight to preserve these Houses, so far as this is possible; but to speak plainly, if the Congregation be not established outside the Kingdom of Naples, it will never be a real Congregation. I am approaching the end of my days. Upon you who survive will devolve this task of providing for the future permanency of the Congregation so dear to our hearts."

Sentiments such as these filled the soul of Alphonsus when he heard of the entrance of the two Germans into the Congregation. This was news indeed, and it spread rapidly among the Neapolitan brethren. The reception of two foreigners was a significant event for the little Congregation, until now made up exclusively of Neapolitans. This was such an evident departure from the traditions that the plan of the two Austrians,

as yet novices at San Giuliano, to establish a foundation in Vienna was the cause of no little merriment to the Neapolitans. Father Tannoja tells us that such was the sentiment with which Hofbauer's plan was generally greeted in Naples; but he adds that Alphonsus was quite enthusiastic about it. He declared that God would not fail to spread His glory in those distant regions by means of these German subjects. Not fully acquainted with religious conditions in the North, he believed that they would live there among Lutherans and Calvinists, and would therefore do far more good by catechetical instructions than by sermons. Their first and chief duty would be to teach the people the *Credo*. "These two Germans," he said, "can accomplish much good as Priests, but they have great need of divine enlightenment. I would write to them, but it is not the will of God that I interfere in the matter."

Toward the end of his life, the Saint expressed himself still more clearly concerning the future of the Congregation. "Believe me," he said one day in the presence of several of the Fathers, "the Congregation will endure till the Day of Judgment, for it is not my work, but the work of God. As long as I am alive it will continue to exist in obscurity and lowliness; but after my death it will spread out its wings, especially in the northern countries." This prophecy has been literally fulfilled. In the year of Liguori's death Hofbauer and Huebl began their labors in the distant North.

On one point de Paola was in perfect accord with the Founder, and that was, that the Congregation must spread out its wings. The new Superior General was a man of great enterprise and far-reaching plans. In the early eighties, several of his Fathers applied to the Propaganda for a mission-field beyond the seas. De Paola heartily endorsed their request. The same restless zeal for the future of the Congregation is seen in the prompt sanction he gave to the admission of Hofbauer and Huebl to the novitiate. At the time, it is true, he could have had no other plan than to send them to some territory where German was the language of the people. They were merely to establish a center for further and wider activities in the North; and that it was with this distinct under-

standing that Hofbauer and Huebl joined the Congregation until then confined to Italy, cannot be questioned. Had Hofbauer been a young man of sixteen or eighteen, still capable of mastering the Italian language, the case might have been entirely different. But for a man of his mature years, a continuous sojourn in Italy would have been equivalent to almost perpetual inactivity. Unceasingly the rôle of the Carthusian would have been his; the character and aspirations of the Apostle, so pronounced in him, would have died of inertia, or driven him forth as they had driven him from the seclusion of Tivoli. Even the Neapolitan Redemptorists complained that they met with little response among the people of the Papal States.

In view of these facts, it is not hard to understand why the proposed foundation in Vienna was so frequently the topic of conversation and discussion with the two German novices. These facts, too, will explain why the date of their religious profession was advanced only on condition that they supply the remaining months of their novitiate later on. Immediately after their Profession they left the house of the novitiate, to complete their studies at Frosinone. They had still to fill out part of their noviceship before their return to Austria. The evident object of admitting them to profession before the usual time seems, therefore, to have been to imbue them more thoroughly with the spirit of the Institute and acquaint them more minutely with the Rules of the Congregation, by requiring them to finish their novitiate in one of the Italian Houses immediately before their departure for the North. By the end of October, 1785, just one year had elapsed since they received the Redemptorist Habit, and it was about this time that they returned to Rome.

It is worthy of note that their arrival in Rome was practically coincident with the opening of the General Chapter of Scifelli on October 15, 1785. Father de Paola was in charge of proceedings. Certain matters discussed and decided at this Chapter were of great significance, when we consider the future activity of our Saint. One of the decrees of the Chapter reads: "Even though the Rule declares that the giving of Missions is one of the principal ends of the Congregation, and

that all subjects must by preference devote themselves to this work, yet the Chapter, after due consideration, has decided that the teaching of the Humanities, of Philosophy and Theology, and also of other branches of learning, is in no wise contrary to the Rule." This resolution was passed by way of experiment. Its object was to determine from actual experience whether this sort of activity would prove conducive to the welfare and growth of the Congregation. In the early years of the Institute Alphonsus himself had included in the program of its work at least the elementary instruction of the schools. The primary object of his Congregation, to be sure, was to promote the spiritual welfare of the abandoned people in the country-districts; but he then believed that this object could be attained in no better or more effective way than by instructing the children of the poor.[2] He was soon compelled to omit this school-work entirely, not on account of any principle involved, but because of conditions in the Kingdom, which convinced him that it would be better to devote himself with his few subjects to the giving of missions and spiritual exercises. Thenceforth the exclusion of all other apostolic labors in favor of the missions became the uniform policy of the Founder.

In this sense the Rule approved by Pope Benedict XIV had been drawn up. Consequently, the Chapter of Scifelli was laboring under a false impression if it imagined that the addition of teaching to the program of the principal labors of the Congregation could be reconciled with the Rule of 1749. At best the only sanction for such an innovation was to be found in the original intention of the Founder, which he himself had abandoned, or, possibly in the fact that the conditions which forced Liguori to drop the school-work were non-existent in the Papal States and elsewhere. It is not for us to decide whether the Chapter of Scifelli acted prudently in this matter, or to what extent the endeavor to enter upon this new field of labor, however laudable in itself, may have been justified. Whatever else we may think of it, there can be no doubt what-

[2] In a letter dated March, 1733, the Founder, in enumerating the kinds of work proper to the Congregation, mentions the schools in the first place. He brought the Redemptoristine Nuns to Scala precisely for the purpose of teaching the girls.

ever that the efforts of de Paola's party in this direction were of real value to the Congregation, since they broke down the barriers that threatened to strangle its growth, prevent its expansion, and confine the activities of its members. They lifted the work of Alphonsus de Liguori over the Alps and scattered its blessings in the distant North. Even during the reign of Maria Theresa the missions had not only been frowned upon, but actually placed under interdict by the government; consequently, a Congregation whose sole object was the giving of missions would have found itself an unwelcome intruder in Austria, without reason for its existence there and without the means of self-preservation. Only as a teaching Order, therefore, could the Redemptorists venture across the Alps, and only in that capacity could the Congregation hope to survive within the Austrian Empire.

Did the Chapter of Scifelli have our two Austrian Redemptorists chiefly in mind, when it ordained that the educational work be tentatively added to the list of works proper to the Congregation? Very probably it was just at this time, when these matters were being debated at Scifelli, that they set out for Vienna. At all events, the Rule given to them on their departure was in perfect accord with the spirit and the decrees of this Chapter. Those parts of the Rule of 1749 that had reference to the labors of the members of the Congregation were considerably changed in favor of Hofbauer and Huebl. All mention of the missions was omitted. The very word " missions " was tactfully avoided. Particular emphasis, however, was placed on preaching, and next to preaching, teaching was stressed as one of the distinctive labors of the members. Accordingly, the brethren were encouraged to organize and maintain schools for poor and neglected boys. Finally, this Rule made provision for the care and safety of young women exposed to danger and temptation, and, in an appendix to the Rule, minute instructions are given regarding this kind of work. In this same appendix the founding of a Community of Women, with the Rule and under the direction of the Fathers, is proposed, its object being to educate and train orphan girls, instruct young women in the duties proper to their sex, and conduct Maternity Hospitals for poor and

fallen women. The prohibition of the Rule to take charge of Parishes was omitted, and an appendix to this Rule contained minute directions for such Fathers as are appointed Pastors. Here again the need and importance of the Parish Schools are emphasized.

Although it cannot be proved, we may accept it as certain that Father de Paola sought and obtained from the Sovereign Pontiff, at least orally, a provisional approbation of this greatly modified Rule. Pope Pius VI was better acquainted with conditions in Austria, the immediate destination of Hofbauer and Huebl, than any one else. The fact that all reference to the "missions" was cautiously eschewed in the text of the Rule, is a positive proof that the altered Rule was intended primarily for Austria, where at that time the very word "mission" was ostracized. This is further confirmed by the emphasis placed upon educational, parochial, and social welfare work, upon which a convent in Austria had chiefly to depend for its stability. The first wave of the Josephist storm had affected only the contemplative Orders; convents connected with parishes, communities caring for the sick, in charge of boarding-schools, or devoted to educating the young, were promised protection by the government. There may, then, have been good ground for believing, as de Paola and Hofbauer believed, that the enlarged program of its activities would secure a ready admission for the Congregation into Austria. Pope Pius VI, who was so sorely distressed over the sufferings of the Church in Austria, probably hailed the project of the two Austrians with sentiments of joy and consolation. Before their departure, he granted them a special audience and gave them his blessing. From the Dean of the Sacred College, Cardinal Albani, they received a letter of recommendation to the Nuncio at Vienna. It is evident, therefore, that the two religious were sent to Vienna with the full approval of the Roman Curia.

At this time, when Hofbauer and Huebl were making preparations for their journey, there were two other German novices at San Giuliano. The one, John Weickert, of the diocese of Bamberg, was a priest ordained forty years previously; the other was a student from Lower Austria, Francis Egkher by name. Both received the Habit of the Congregation on July

20, 1785. Not without reason, then, did Father de Paola hope that as time went on and the Institute of Alphonsus de Liguori gradually became known among the German people, more German candidates would ask for admission.

It was probably late in October, 1785, that Hofbauer and Huebl left San Giuliano and set out for the North. They had spent hardly a year in Italy; but it had been an eventful year. Attired as secular priests, they traveled through Tyrol to Vienna.

Naturally, Hofbauer was appointed, not only Huebl's Superior, but Superior of the foundation yet to be, and of all the subjects who should form its future community. Hitherto Hofbauer had always acted as a guide and guardian to his friend, who was his junior by ten years. The exterior deportment and appearance of the two men easily revealed this relationship. In an official document describing the two travelers, it is stated that, "the older one calls himself Father Clement Hofbauer . . . is taller of stature, and has a full face and black hair," while "the other, who calls himself Father Huebl . . . is shorter and thin." The mixture of the Slav and the German was clearly discernible in Hofbauer. His medium height, compact build, well-developed chest, broad shoulders, short neck, and full features were typical of the German peasantry of southern Moravia. His well-formed head with his small eyes, and his face which was round rather than long, revealed the presence of the Slav. There was in his whole make-up, however, much that seemed incongruous with his robust appearance. His soft, lisping voice, for example, and his small, delicate hands much given to gesticulating, seemed quite ill-suited to so strong and manly a frame, and we are told that he was very susceptible to the cold. A like commingling of strength and tenderness appears in his spiritual life. With an inflexible will-power there was united a singular sensitiveness. Any trouble, any sad news, was enough to cause him sleepless nights. On at least six occasions during the time of his priestly activities he had to take to his bed on account of nervous exhaustion or other bodily ailments. The Divine Creator had so mightily and yet so delicately fashioned his soul and formed his body, that he was fitted at once for the greatest undertakings and for the keenest suffering.

CHAPTER V

BACK IN VIENNA (1785–1786) — COMPLETING HIS STUDIES — FRUITLESS EFFORTS TO SECURE A FOUNDATION

HOFBAUER and Huebl spent nearly a year in Vienna after their return from Italy. Old friends and new benefactors provided for their support. Father de Paola was unable to assist them; on the contrary, he expected them to assist him. In his very first letter to Vienna the General admonished them not to forget the poor Congregation, and especially San Giuliano. The normal and usual procedure with new foundations was in this case reversed. Ordinarily the Mother-House must provide for the new foundation until it has become self-supporting. From the very outset Hofbauer was left to his own resources. It was never to be otherwise.

It has not been hitherto known that Hofbauer and Huebl devoted this year in Vienna to the prosecution of their studies. Since the days of Maria Theresa much had been done in Austria to develop an effective system of primary education. About the year 1770, normal schools were established in all the larger cities. In these schools preparatory courses were conducted, which the candidates for the ministry were obliged to attend. In Vienna the normal school was attached to the Church of St. Anne, and thither Hofbauer and Huebl regularly went, during the scholastic year of 1785 to 1786, for the course in catechetics. Besides attending the lectures on pedagogy and catechising, they had specified hours of study, and very probably were expected to give practical demonstrations of their skill as teachers and instructors. The Director, Joseph Anthony Gall, of Suabia, was one of the ablest schoolmen of his time. His enthusiastic support of the Felbiger method had brought Gall to Vienna, in 1773, with the result that Austria thenceforth became his home. In 1780, he was appointed Supervisor of the entire school system in Lower Austria. All reforms made in the department of education

under Joseph II, date from his incumbency. Further honors came to him when, in 1788, the Emperor appointed him Bishop of Linz.

Hofbauer and his friend Huebl accumulated much technical knowledge at St. Anne's School; but they saw at once that hostility to the Church and to its Christian-Catholic Faith, with the other demoralizing influences characteristic of the age, had penetrated even to the primary schools, where the well-springs of religion should have been preserved in all their crystalline purity. During the reign of Maria Theresa, hymn-books and prayer-books, shorn of everything distinctly Catholic, had been introduced into the normal schools. The opposition of the older clergy, however, had caused these to be withdrawn. Under Joseph II they were again introduced. The Catechism in use since 1777 was full of imperfections and inaccuracies. Even Gall, who in other respects ranked as a Josephist, declared himself much dissatisfied with "this dry, abstract, unintelligible catechism." The teacher of Religion, however, was invariably obliged to follow the prescribed text-books, all of which smacked of Gallicanism. The history of the Church after the Apostolic Age was withheld from the young in its entirety. According to one who was well acquainted with these conditions, the mere mention of the Papacy was carefully avoided in the primary schools and in the churches, and neither the origin nor the authority of the Papacy was ever so much as touched upon. Thirty years of this uncatholic system of religious education had left their marks, and Hofbauer was not slow to note the results in the moral atmosphere of Vienna.

The end of the scholastic year proved to be also the end of all systematic study, as such, for Hofbauer. Further and deeper studies were out of the question owing to the numerous external labors which soon demanded his attention. However, he had more leisure than the early biographers of the Saint would have us believe. We must remember that during this year in Vienna he was not called upon to do any apostolic work; consequently he was able to devote his time principally to study. From this it is clear that he must have spent at least three of four years in the actual study of Theology. For a

man of his mature mentality, pursuing his studies with an unflagging diligence, and able to grasp at a glance the truths of religion, these few years were the equivalent of twice or thrice that length of time devoted to study by one not so gifted. Of his talents, his mental acumen, and his capacity for knowledge, no record has been preserved. Still, viewing his life as a whole, and recalling the extent and value of his services to the Church, one must credit him with a mind quick to grasp and almost sure to retain in the store-house of a capacious memory, whatever knowledge his books unfolded to him. These were gifts that must have considerably lightened the burden of studies pursued under singularly trying circumstances. Those who were close to him during the last years of his life, and therefore in a position to estimate him correctly, tell us that his was not so much a book-knowledge of Theology as a practical, working knowledge remarkable for its solidity and its keen penetration. The sources from which he drew his wisdom were few, but they were those upon which, in the last analysis, all theological knowledge is based. His theological weapons were forged and his theological armor was fashioned on the age-old, indestructible anvils of the Church — the Sacred Scriptures, the writings of the Fathers, and the Roman Catechism. In these writings he was thoroughly versed. During a severe illness toward the end of his life, he cited in his delirium a host of texts from the Fathers of the Church. He had a special predilection for Church History: the history of the Church and the fact of its continued existence after all the storms and persecutions it had endured, were to him the most convincing proof of the divine origin of the Catholic Church. The philosophical proofs, he was wont to say, are only for beginners. Among the works on Church History he read and studied with preference that of Bérault-Bercastel. This work, consisting of twenty-four volumes, was published from 1778 to 1790, and soon met with great favor. A German translation of it appeared in Vienna in 1784.

Hofbauer always remained a stranger to worldly science. A stranger, too, he remained to the affected and elevated style of speech then in vogue among the classical writers of the day. In this connection it must be borne in mind that he had spent

more than twenty-five years abroad, and his German in consequence was antiquated. The style of his German correspondence was stiff, whereas that of his Latin letters was as fluent as it was correct.

Study, however, was not Hofbauer's chief concern during the year following his return from San Giuliano. He had come to gain admission for the Congregation into Austria, and if possible, into Vienna itself. What steps he took toward accomplishing this object, we do not know. There are extant three letters written by Father de Paola during this time to Hofbauer and Huebl. On February 7, 1786, the Superior General complains that they did not write him concerning their affairs: "If you have well-founded prospects of establishing a foundation in those countries, I will not refuse to send you more Fathers. But if no such definite hopes are held out to you, it were better for you to return to Italy."

Very likely a letter of Hofbauer's, assuring the General that the outlook was not entirely hopeless, arrived in Rome soon after the foregoing was written; for in the course of the same month Father Weickert set out from Rome for Vienna, and on February 26, de Paola promised to send them Egkher, who was still a novice.

On May 19, Hofbauer, Huebl, and Weickert celebrated Holy Mass at the shrine of Mariazell. Shortly after this Weickert separated from the others, possibly because of some misunderstanding between him and Hofbauer who was a few years younger than he. A subsequent letter of de Paola's leads us to believe that Weickert of his own accord attempted a foundation elsewhere in Germany, perhaps in his native Bavaria. Failing in this, he returned to Italy a year or two later, and, in 1789, procured a dispensation from his vows.

De Paola's third letter to Hofbauer was written on June 10, in reply to Hofbauer's letter of May 29. Hofbauer had probably stated that he intended to leave Vienna, for Father de Paola asks for the new address, so that his letters may not go astray. Whether they had intended to go, or whether they actually left Vienna shortly after this, cannot be determined. Certain it is that they were in Vienna about the middle of October. Of the intervening months we know nothing. In a

postscript to the letter of June 10, Father de Paola urges him to include as many novices as possible in his apostolic band, but to use great caution in making his selection; and he counsels him to take with him sufficient money to defray the cost of building the new convent. The invitation to return to Italy, if they should not succeed in establishing the new foundation, is here again repeated.

It seems clear, then, that during the months of May and June Hofbauer was contemplating a foundation elsewhere. A foundation in Austria had clearly proved impossible. There was no let-up there in the suppression of convents. Every convent that could possibly be dispensed with was closed forthwith, irrespectively of the kind of work or the sphere of activity in which its members were engaged.

One of the oft-repeated traditions of former biographers is to the effect, that while at Vienna Hofbauer placed himself at the disposal of the Propaganda, which, upon accepting his offer, assigned to him and Huebl the care of the German Catholics in Russian Poland. The fact is, that they themselves, while they were still in Vienna, had decided upon this field as the scene of their labors. By the annexation of White Russia, effected through the first partition of Poland, in 1772, many Catholics of the Latin rite were brought under the domain of Catherine II. The Empress thereupon appointed the Bishop of Mohilev pastor of all the Latins in her Empire. In the year 1783, Pius VI erected the Archiepiscopal See of Mohilev and included all the former Russian Mission-Prefectures within its jurisdiction. Catherine permitted the Archbishop to summon to his aid priests from other countries, whose chief duty was to minister to the people of White Russia. It is a known fact that the Jesuits, suppressed and frowned upon in every other country, took advantage of this invitation and flocked in great numbers to Russian Poland. The welcome thus extended by the Empress had its own compensation: it not only provided the Jesuits a haven of refuge from the storms that beset them on all sides, but at very little expense secured to the schools of Russia the ablest educators in Europe. As ex-Jesuits were constantly passing from Lower Germany and Austria into White Russia, it is easy to see how the attention

of the two Austrian Redemptorists, unable to get a secure footing in their own fatherland, was directed to that missionary field. If an invitation to settle in White Russia did come from another source, it probably came from a man with whom Hofbauer had formed an intimate friendship either during this year of his sojourn in Vienna, or perhaps even before this time. The man to whom we refer was the Baron Joseph von Penckler. Penckler had kept in close touch with the members of the suppressed Society of Jesus, and was in constant correspondence with the Superior General of the Society then residing in White Russia. It may have been he, therefore, that advised Hofbauer to labor for a time with the German ex-Jesuits in White Russia. The new project of transferring their activities from Austria to another country, was, to be sure, a wide departure from their original plans; still, it was better, and to the apostolic soul of Hofbauer it addressed itself far more eloquently, than the prospect of returning to the States of the Church and there spending his life in an enforced inactivity.

Father de Paola gave his consent, and early in October the two religious made ready to depart from Vienna. The Cardinal Archbishop Migazzi invited them to a farewell dinner. Not without the keenest regret did this noble Prince of the Church, this staunch friend and defender of convents threatened with extinction, bid good-bye to the two zealous young religious, for he could have found ample work for them in his diocese.

Either shortly before their departure, or after setting out on their journey, Hofbauer once again happened upon Kunzmann. The old wanderer was making a pilgrimage to the sepulcher of the Three Holy Magi at Cologne. After this pilgrimage he intended to return to Italy to pass the rest of his days there as a hermit. His strength was completely gone and he was totally unfit for heavy work. Upon Hofbauer's promise to secure him admission into the Congregation, Kunzmann abandoned these ideas and was glad to go with his friend to White Russia. Thus was Hofbauer reunited by the bonds of fraternal charity to the two companions of his youthful pilgrimages. This harmless incident was later reported in

the press of Vienna. Toward the end of that year, the *Wiener Kirchenzeitung,* founded shortly before by the Provost Wittola, printed the following notice: "Not long since two Roman ex-Jesuits on a pilgrimage to Mohilev, stopped at this city. Their names we could not ascertain, but they gained several recruits. Although we do not know the number of these recruits, we can mention the name of one of them — Peter Kunzmann. After gaining him over to their cause, they clothed him in the religious habit, called him Emmanuel, and took him with them to Mohilev." [1]

Warsaw was the immediate destination of the three travelers. The Nuncio there was to assign to them their particular sphere of labor.

During the first night of the journey they found shelter in Retz, on the northern frontier of Lower Austria. A Mr. Berger, who was a teacher in Retz, going over the same road in his carriage, had chanced to meet them as they were making their way with difficulty through the mud. He invited them to ride with him and to spend the night at his house.

Hofbauer spent only a few hours with this hospitable family, but during that short time made an indelible impression on the minds of those good people. Meeting and conversing with their guest for the first time, they were convinced that he was a very extraordinary man. So great was the esteem that he inspired, that the bed in which he had slept during that one night remained unused for years thereafter. The next morning Berger drove his guests to Znaim. Before continuing his journey from Znaim, Hofbauer sent a letter to the Berger family, in which he gives expression to his heartfelt appreciation of their kindness and hospitality. This is the first of the

[1] A year later, upon learning of the nonsense that Wittola had written about him, Hofbauer sent a long explanatory letter to him from Warsaw, in which he writes: "All that has been written will not harm us in the least. Our friends in Vienna as well as in our native land merely laugh at it. Our only regret is, that confidence in, and respect for, a man not a little renowned in Germany for his learning, may thereby be lessened." Then follow minute particulars about the Congregation and its Founder, and about the undertaking in Warsaw. Wittola published the account in its entirety in the pages of his paper, and in a footnote gives free vent to his hatred of these religious who were wholly unknown to him. Hofbauer's offer to call upon him shortly in Vienna was received with contempt. (Hofbauer's letter and Wittola's comments, in Innerkofler, pp. 59–64, Note 2.)

Saint's letters that has been preserved. It was treasured in the family as a sacred thing. "To this letter," Berger's wife long after declared to one of Hofbauer's disciples, "we owe our temporal prosperity, for with it blessing entered our home."

After a visit to Tasswitz, they continued on their way, but no further particulars of the journey have come down to us. It is quite probable that Father Huebl also visited his home in northern Bohemia. These detours and the extreme severity of the winter may have been the reason that they arrived at Warsaw only in February, 1787.

Second Part

IN WARSAW — APOSTOLIC AND CHARITABLE LABORS — FOUNDING OF A TRANSALPINE BRANCH OF THE REDEMPTORISTS

1787–1802

CHAPTER I

THE FIRST YEARS IN WARSAW (1787–1793) — FOUNDING OF THE HOUSE OF ST. BENNO

ARRIVED in Warsaw, the destination of our apostolic wanderers was twice changed. The Nuncio, Monsignor Ferdinand Maria Saluzzo, a descendant of the noble Neapolitan family of the Corigliani and a personal friend and admirer of Liguori's, at first assigned the two Redemptorist priests to Stralsund in Swedish Pomerania. The reason for this change in his original plans probably lay in the fact that Stralsund was without priests at the time, whereas White Russia was well provided with ex-Jesuits. It would have proved an arduous missionary field indeed. But the two missionaries were not at once to take up their work there. Owing to the inclemency of the weather, they were instructed to postpone their journey thither till a more favorable season of the year. In the meantime circumstances arose which led the Nuncio to cancel their appointment to Pomerania. Not Stralsund, but Warsaw itself was to be the first witness to Hofbauer's unflagging zeal in the cause of Christ. A German charitable organization called the Confraternity of St. Benno, in existence since the seventeenth century, made overtures for the services of the two German travelers, almost as soon as they had been apprised of their presence in Warsaw. The object of this organization was to provide shelter for poor travelers, to minister to the sick among them, and to care for the orphaned children of foreigners in the city. In 1781, the Confraternity had acquired possession of the church in St. John's Street, which was without a pastor in consequence of the suppression of the Jesuits. The buildings connected with the church likewise passed over to the organization, which assumed the obligation of supporting three priests, two German and one Polish, and of establishing and maintaining a school for poor German children. These obligations,

however, were not at all easy of fulfilment, and at the time of Hofbauer's arrival in Warsaw, the Directors of the Confraternity were still casting about aimlessly for the three priests they had contracted to provide. The appearance of the two German travelers on the scene seemed in every way providential, and the Directors forthwith entreated them to remain in Warsaw and to "do there what they intended doing in Stralsund." The Nuncio, Saluzzo, was strongly drawn to this plan. King Stanislaus II Poniatowski, with whom he conferred on the matter, positively forbade the missionaries to leave the city and summoned them to an audience. After the first partition of Poland, in 1772, a great wave of reform had swept over the shattered kingdom. This effort to save the kingdom from utter disaster was noticeable chiefly in the educational system. As the dissolute but talented and enthusiastic King had placed himself at the head of the movement, and as he favored German above all other talent, his efforts to secure the two German priests for one of the schools in Warsaw can easily be explained. During the audience with them, he held out prospects of a foundation, approved in advance the reception of new members into the community, and even promised to provide for their support.

At the earnest solicitation of the Directors of the Confraternity, Father de Paola granted the Fathers permission to remain in Warsaw for a year or even longer, as necessity might require. Neither the General nor Hofbauer had at that time the remotest idea of a permanent foundation, and in this sense the contract with the Confraternity was drawn up. The church of the Confraternity, St. Benno's, situated in the new section of Warsaw on the borders of the Vistula, was entrusted to the missionaries, who engaged to hold divine services for the German population and to erect a school for poor children.

It is quite probable that Hofbauer did not fully realize the extremely difficult course to which he was committing himself when he put his signature to this contract. The fact is that he had to begin his allotted work with absolutely nothing. He had no resources whatever. The buildings destined to serve as a home of the future religious community and as a school for the poor, were two one-story structures not much

better than huts. Indeed, they were actually described as "huts" in a municipal document. The one was built of stone and contained five rooms; the other was a frame structure with two rooms. A table and a few chairs constituted the entire furniture. Water constantly trickled down the walls of the sleeping apartment, making it so damp that they could not venture to sleep on the floor. There were no beds. The first few nights two of the religious slept on the table, while the third rested in a chair until one of the others vacated a place on the table for him.

Kunzmann, although he had never in his life done any cooking, took over the care of the kitchen. He carved a few spoons out of wood, and some good people lent the Fathers other necessary utensils. Their only source of revenue was the rent from two houses owned by the Confraternity; these houses were situated in the old section of the city, and being mere huts like those at St. Benno's, they brought the Fathers very little if any income.

Hofbauer never received any pecuniary assistance from the Confraternity. The money that he had on his arrival in Warsaw had dwindled to three dollars. Had his friends in Vienna not come to his assistance, he could never even have begun the work at St. Benno's. His greatest benefactors were Francis Schmid and Penckler. A police report of Vienna states very plainly that Penckler had donated a considerable part of his fortune to Hofbauer's Order.

The altars in the church were literally covered with filth and dust; but fortunately the church required little more than a thorough cleansing. This done, the new pastor at once took up his duties, preaching regularly to the people and as regularly going into the confessional. The attendance, however, was very small in the beginning. During the first year only two thousand Communions were distributed. This was not very encouraging, but neither was it very surprising, for the Germans in Warsaw were very lukewarm in the practice of their religion, and the Poles deliberately avoided the "Bennonites." Still, one must not be too severe in judging the Polish people of that day. One must remember that the wanton partition of their country had inflamed the minds of

the populace. Hatred toward the foreigner was still on the increase. The common people were wont to regard every German as a Lutheran. Hence the news that German was being preached again at St. Benno's, and that a school had been opened there, was decried as an attempt to Germanize the people. Hofbauer and Huebl were openly insulted in the streets, jeered at as Lutherans and Germans. Even the ex-Jesuits still residing in Warsaw were counted by Hofbauer among his opponents, because, as he said, " they claim that we are bent upon their ruin." [1]

Nor was the reception which they received from the secular clergy more friendly. On the ground that there were enough convents in the city, Okeçki, who was the Bishop of Warsaw at the time, absolutely refused the newcomers permission to establish a convent. The only concession he made was, that the Redemptorist Fathers who were already in the city, and they alone, might be considered as chaplains of the German Confraternity of St. Benno's.

From the very beginning the school for poor children of German nationality, which formed the principal item in the contract with the Confraternity, demanded their entire and undivided attention. According to stipulation, it was to be a " free " school. This school for the poor was in operation as early as the year 1787–1788. In a letter sent to Vienna at the beginning of 1788, Hofbauer writes: " Our task is to erect a German school, for heretofore there existed here no public school for the Germans. We have in this city children of different nationalities and creeds, Germans, Poles, and Russians. The task is a gigantic one and leaves us very little time for rest."

The classes were arranged according to the Austrian, or so-called German school-system; for ever since the days of Maria Theresa the Austrian public schools were looked upon as models throughout all Europe. Even Catherine II, the Empress of Russia, procured from Vienna all text-books intended for use in the Russian schools. Pupils attending St. Benno's and desiring to make more advanced studies upon the com-

[1] Hofbauer later carried on a correspondence with the ex-Jesuits in White Russia, and with their General, who resided there.

pletion of the primary course, were instructed in the rudiments of Latin. From the very outset the school numbered about two hundred pupils.

A number of neglected children received and cared for in the house, formed the nucleus of a small orphan asylum located next to the school for the poor. Hofbauer named this institution the "Child Jesus Asylum," the usual name given to institutions of this kind in those days. Some of these children had been wofully neglected and when picked up from the streets, were grimy, unkempt, and covered with vermin. Hofbauer did not hesitate to wash, comb, and cleanse these little waifs with his own hands, — "not an easy task," as he would add with a smile, when relating these events in after years. Owing to lack of room, only about a dozen such children could be cared for. But a much larger number came regularly to the institution for food and clothing.

This solicitude for the young was something theretofore unknown in the city of Warsaw. "The Child Jesus Asylum," Hofbauer wrote in his official report of St. Benno's, "is the only institution here that not only receives orphans and poor children, but provides them with food, clothing, and education as well." This alone will give some idea of the low ebb to which practical Christian charity had fallen in the metropolis of Poland at that time; but it will likewise explain why the new pastor of St. Benno's, who, without money of his own and without any other substantial means of support, set his hand to undertakings of this kind, little by little attracted the attention and won the sympathy of the people.

In spite of the zeal and energy with which the Saint entered upon this work, he had no thought of remaining in Warsaw. He did not even desire a permanent foundation here. His only idea, his one desire, was to help out temporarily, to relieve present distress. The material conditions alone seemed to preclude all thought of continuing permanently at this post. And yet, Hofbauer made no mistake in allowing himself to be detained here beyond the stipulated time; for, viewing this period of his life in the retrospect, we cannot doubt that Divine Providence had selected St. Benno's not merely as the first field of his labor, but as the field best suited to his burn-

ing zeal and irrepressible energy. Oftentimes, perhaps, even the heart of Hofbauer was tried as by fire. There must have been dark hours, when only the whisperings of a faith such as his could have assured him that beyond the dismal clouds overhead the sun was shining in all its noonday splendor. At such times even the strong of heart have need of heartening; and on one such occasion at least such heartening was not denied him. A mysterious happening at this time was set down by Hofbauer himself as a voice from heaven warning him not to lose courage or give up the good fight. One day he and Huebl were sitting together after dinner, engaged in conversation. They were discussing their desperate circumstances with sentiments resembling those of the two disciples on the road to Emmaus. Suddenly the sad conversation was interrupted by a terrific noise which resounded through the room. "Monsignor Liguori has just died," Hofbauer immediately declared, and noted the day and the hour. It was August 1, 1787. Not long after, news arrived from Italy that the saintly Founder had departed this life on that very day. The Redemptorists at St. Benno's, therefore, were justified in regarding this strange announcement of Liguori's death as a pledge that their Father and Founder, from his place in heaven, would not be unmindful of his sons laboring in the distant North. Basing his calculations on human arguments alone, however, Hofbauer could arrive at no other conclusion than that he had made a serious mistake when he decided on taking over the care of St. Benno's. In fact, in the aforementioned letter to his friends in Vienna, January, 1788, he wrote that he would soon return to Italy.

The difficulties encountered at Warsaw were not the only reason for his wishing to quit the city as soon as circumstances permitted. The real reason lay concealed in a plan which he had formed to ensure permanency to the Transalpine Branch of the Congregation, and which occupied all his thoughts at this time. This may come as a shock to us, unless we endeavor to penetrate into the thoughts of the Superior of St. Benno's, and view his position there from his angle and with his eyes. His allotted task was not to find a field of labor for Huebl and himself; that was of minor im-

portance. He was permitted to set out for the North with the distinct understanding that, within a reasonable time, he would establish a new branch of the Congregation in some country north of the Alps. Only on the supposition that he was laboring, and that not without well-grounded hope, for such a branch, could his continued absence from Italy be justified. The two young religious could not live indefinitely without some connection with their Congregation. Hence the oft-repeated warning in the letters of the Father General at this time, that, "if there were no prospects of a strong and vigorous foundation, they should return to Italy, where he could easily find employment for them." As soon, therefore, as Hofbauer had gained a firm footing in Warsaw, the question of admitting new candidates naturally leaped into prominence. But his experience during the first few months of his sojourn in that city convinced him of the hopelessness of winning recruits there so long as the open hostility of the native priests and people continued unabated. The Poles avoided him, and he could not reckon on many German candidates in a territory so far removed from German soil. Under normal conditions, it would have been the duty of the Mother-House in Italy to furnish the personnel for the formation and upbuilding of the new community, at least during the first few years. But conditions were far from normal. Good will and good intentions on the part of the Roman Superiors were not wanting. Neither was there any lack of Germans applying for admission at San Giuliano. Hofbauer himself very probably made provision for this. Unfortunately, however, the first two Germans that were received after him, proved a sad experiment. Weickert, as has been remarked, left the Congregation shortly after his religious profession. Egkher began to act very strangely, and was the object of not a little anxiety to those about him, until the real cause of his queer behavior was discovered: the young man was found to be mentally unbalanced. After this other candidates were refused admission, chiefly because very few of the applicants were able to furnish the sum of one hundred scudi, which was invariably required as patrimony. Hofbauer keenly regretted that this condition for admission continued to be enforced. "In this country,"

he remarked later on, "we would gladly give this amount to the candidates, if we could only get the candidates." The principal reason for not admitting foreigners was that the Roman authorities feared further trouble and inconveniences. This the Father General frankly confessed in one of his letters.

But aside from all this, the Fathers in Italy could hardly be blamed, if, in their straitened circumstances, they hesitated to assume the responsibility of providing recruits for the countries beyond the Alps. And, of course, Hofbauer could count just as little on any financial aid from Italy. On the contrary, in Italy they actually expected assistance from him, and Hofbauer, in the spirit of a good child that loves its mother, did comply with these wishes. The Mass stipends and other alms that he sent to Italy in the course of those years amounted in the aggregate to a considerable sum.

It is evident, then, that Hofbauer was cast entirely upon his own resources. Still, he clung to his opinion that Italy should have provided the recruits for the North. The majority of ecclesiastical students were still drawn to the Roman colleges, and among these there was never any dearth of religious vocations. In those days when convents were looked upon with an evil eye in other countries, and when the religious life was anathema elsewhere, the Papal States were the natural place of asylum and sanctuary for those who felt themselves called to the service of the Church. In the past, whenever the hot winds of persecution had laid waste the fair fields of the Church in any land, did not fresh Catholic life stream forth from the great national seminaries of Rome and cause the desert once more to bloom in those stricken countries? As a pilgrim in Rome, Hofbauer, no doubt, had frequently passed by the *Collegium Germanicum* to which Catholicity in Germany was so deeply indebted. There exist positive proofs that Hofbauer, after forming his first concrete plan for the Congregation north of the Alps, carried on a correspondence with the Missionary Institutes in Rome. He had his heart set upon the establishment of a large Novitiate and a House of Studies in the Papal States, preferably in Rome itself, for the training of German and Polish youths desirous of entering his Congregation.

Upon completing their noviceship and seminary course there, they were to return to their native land and labor for the spiritual well-being of their fellow-countrymen. This German-Polish College at Rome, Hofbauer believed, would eventually become the Mother-House of many Redemptorist foundations beyond the Alps. As early as the year 1788, he made known this plan with all its details to the Papal Nuncio, expressing the hope of obtaining for his purpose one of the vacant Jesuit colleges. His friends and benefactors, he felt confident, would furnish the necessary funds; he and Father Huebl would assume charge of the College. Thus, while continuing dependent in every way upon the Superior General, they would maintain the College without burdening the Congregation. This plan, so full of promise for the future, and so far-reaching in its benefits, at once enlisted the Nuncio's sympathy. Father de Paola, too, was captivated by it, and offered to apply in person to the Holy Father for the College. Should his petition be denied, he pledged himself to procure a suitable College at the expense of the Congregation, provided the candidates would thereafter support the institution.

Many obstacles, however, arose to prevent the execution of this plan. The Jesuit College had already been disposed of. The convent of another Order in Hungary which was about to be closed, was then proposed. In the end, Father de Paola himself offered a house for the purpose. This house, very likely, was none other than the little Convent of San Giuliano itself; for the Procurator General, Father Leggio, wrote to Hofbauer on February 4, 1789, informing him that the house for the novices was ready, and urged him to bring his novices. At all events, the proffered building fell far short of Hofbauer's expectations and requirements. He was contemplating a vast, far-reaching enterprise, almost unlimited in its possibilities, and rather than begin on so small a scale, he preferred not to begin at all. Long afterwards, he declared that they had offered him only a small frame building, such as he could easily procure anywhere in Germany. He declined the offer. What he wrote to Father Leggio we do not know. Judging from the reply he received, it would seem that he expressed himself very bluntly, without much tact or diplomacy. Evidently he

did not mince matters at all in rejecting the proposition. He never did. The sensitive Neapolitan felt slighted and was very much offended. He thanked Hofbauer for the "insolent reply" to his letter, and requested him not to write again. Still, the difficulty of procuring a suitable house for the proposed college and novitiate can hardly explain the collapse of the whole enterprise. There must have been other obtacles. In a letter of much later date, Hofbauer declares that the real cause of the failure of the project was the fact that he had been grievously maligned to Cardinal de Salucci.

For the rest of his life Hofbauer deeply regretted the defeat of this project; he had set his heart upon its realization, and had expected much from its success. Years afterwards he wrote: "We should now be able to supply all Germany with our priests, if at that time they had listened to me in Rome." At this late date it is hard to say upon what grounds he based his hopes for the success of his plan. Probably his belief that a sufficient number of candidates from other countries would apply for admission, if there were such an institution in Rome, was the chief reason for his optimism. In addition, his own personal experiences, what he himself had seen and witnessed at Rome, probably convinced him of the feasibility of his plan. For convinced of its feasibility he assuredly was, since he never fully abandoned it, but hoped against all hope for its realization. Repeatedly, even in the last years of his life, he came back to it.

With the one great ambition of Hofbauer's life as a Redemptorist disclosed, we are now in a better position to look more closely into the soul of our Saint and interpret the yearnings of his heart. From the very beginning of his ministry, when he was as yet a novice in the exercise of pastoral duties, he recognized what was to be the great task of his life — to act as a pioneer for his Congregation by carrying the banner of Alphonsus de Liguori across the Alps and securing for it new and extensive fields of labor outside of Italy. This was not a commission given him by higher authority; it was entirely his own idea and desire, a self-imposed task, to accomplish which he immediately bent all the energy of his soul. To gather together as speedily as possible a numerous band

of Redemptorist missionaries, to imbue them with the apostolic spirit, and to send them forth to preach the gospel to the poor, to seek out and bring salvation to the most abandoned souls — this was the ideal he had set himself. To this end were directed all his plans and undertakings, included in this and subordinated to this were all the other efforts and strivings and yearnings of his religious life. The close student of his apostolic career will not be long in discovering with what unerring accuracy and with what deliberate speed, as the voyage of his life was drawing to a close, his bark was nearing the haven of his highest desire. With what seems studied recklessness, he always and everywhere subordinated all his own pastoral labors to this one end. He was ready at a moment's notice to quit any place, no matter how indispensable might be his presence there, if only, by so departing, he could approach a single step nearer to his goal — to secure the future of his Congregation. He was often blamed for this, even by his closest friends. Frederick Zachary Werner, one of his most enthusiastic admirers, was wont to say: " Hofbauer would be a perfect saint, if he were not forever thinking of establishing new foundations." But those who condemned him thus, did him a palpable injustice. The implied imputation of a narrow-minded, self-centred, illiberal love for his Congregation, that could brook nothing but his Congregation, and could see no good in anything except in so far as it might prosper that Congregation, is something that Clement Maria Hofbauer never deserved. He had frequently and with unmistakable clearness stated the real motives of his endeavors. His zeal for new foundations was only one of the features of that pro gram of apostolic activity to which he had committed himself as a young man. " To do great things for God," to establish anew the Kingdom of God on earth, to defend and extend and confirm that Kingdom — these were his aims. Hofbauer did indeed place the establishment of the Transalpine Congregation at the head of his program; but in so doing he met and supplied one of the most pressing needs of his time. The suppression of the Society of Jesus, the closing of convents in several countries, and above all the open hostility of the eighteenth century to all things Catholic, had made deep breaches

in the ranks of the clergy. Of those that survived the religious cataclysm, too many, alas, worshipped the gods of the day. The Catholic clergy in many sections presented a very sorry spectacle. The work of reform had to begin in the ranks of the clergy. Men like Dalberg and Wessenberg realized this full well, and with laudable zeal and upright intentions set their hands to the task of upbuilding the priestly character; but unfortunately they started from wrong principles and only made matters worse. The Church has constant need of new, untiring, zealous laborers to carry on its internal as well as its external mission, — men to inspire, vivify, and energize its invisible soul and spirit as well as its visible body. Hofbauer invariably came back to this idea. And indeed, if we recall the history of the Church, was not this the very purpose of every newly-founded Order — to come to the aid of the Church in critical times, and to fill up the breaches among the clergy? When Hofbauer appeared on the scene in Europe, the Congregation founded by St. Alphonsus de Liguori was one of the recently established Orders of the Church. As yet it had developed and expanded but very little. Gifted by its saintly Founder with an inherent vitality, with power to fly and to soar, its wings had been clipped by an exclusive, nationalistic policy which restricted its activities within an area that was strictly Neapolitan. As a consequence, the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer remained insignificant, was almost unknown outside of Italy, and even there many seriously questioned its fecundity, its ability to grow and expand, and doubted its destiny as a world-wide institution in the Church. But Hofbauer never for a moment entertained such fears as these; and the fact that he at once recognized the innate energy and dormant powers of the Congregation; the fact that he resolutely set to work to arouse and bring them to full development, revealed, not narrow-mindedness, but rather the true greatness and grandeur of his character. His zeal, so restive in its desire for new foundations, never made him one-sided. His gaze, it is true, was ever fixed on the future; we find him constantly evolving plans for the future. At times these plans seem to us even fantastic. He pictures himself at the head of a great band of apostolic laborers whom he sends

out into all parts of the world. He thinks seriously of the conversion of Switzerland and of Protestant Germany. He proposes leading the peoples of the Balkan States back to the feet of Christ and the fold of His Church, and hopes to penetrate from that country into Asia. His eager glance is directed across the sea to distant America, and he sees there fields that are white for the harvest. And yet, in all this planning, the principal characteristic of the dreamer is lacking. Hofbauer is not a man lost in his dreams or victimized by his schemes: he is primarily and essentially a man of action. He belonged to the future, and yet was a man entirely of the moment. Wherever he went, new religious life sprang forth—a life which many another, however richly endowed with zeal, however inspired with enthusiasm, could scarcely have called into being. One unacquainted with the secret yearnings and aspirations of his soul could never have guessed that this man, his time so taken up and his mind so absorbed with the multitudinous pastoral cares entrusted to him, could still be engrossed in drafting platforms and policies for the future. His zealous toilings in the cause of Christ, therefore, far from being retrenched and foreshortened by his hopes for his Congregation, received their inspiration and their mightiest impulse from the thoroughly Catholic outlook which these very hopes provided. His avidity knew no bounds, when there was question of extending the Kingdom of God. No matter how many souls might be fed to his ardor, the fire of divine love burning within him remained hungry still. A small portion of the Lord's vineyard, by chance entrusted to his care, could in no way satisfy him. Unhesitatingly he accepted and turned to the best advantage every opportunity of exercising his priestly ministry; but the overmastering urge of his life was to organize the forces for good, and by means of organization to multiply himself and perpetuate his work. Never remiss in caring for the individual soul that came to him for guidance and spiritual help, his efforts were at the same time directed toward the Apostolate for the masses. His life as a religious priest and missionary can best be summed up in the words: "Charity never says, 'It is enough.'"

We shall see him laboring during thirty long years for the

establishment and the diffusion of the Transalpine Congregation. The history of his endeavors in this direction, however, is nothing but a chain of failures and disappointments. One shattered plan collapses upon the ruins of another. Even the foundations which he did actually call into being had, one after the other, to be relinquished. In an epoch than which there is in the history of the Church none more hostile to Religious Orders, it was undoubtedly a venturesome undertaking, to attempt to transplant a Neapolitan missionary society into the other countries of Europe. Perhaps it was too venturesome. But the principal reason of his failures was not the weakness of his cause, but the disturbed political condition of the times. At almost the very time that he drew up his plans at St. Benno's, the fury of the politico-religious storm burst upon the countries in the West, and for well-nigh a quarter of a century thereafter all Europe was in the throes of revolutionary wars. These wars may be set down as the immediate obstacles to the plans of our Saint. His greatest adversary was Napoleon. When Napoleon, the creature of the Revolution, had been relegated to the solitary island of St. Helena, and peace once more descended upon Europe, the energies of our Saint were spent.

Had his plans been even partially successful, as they surely would have been in normal times, his biography would be grander, but not nearly so attractive nor so instructive and so edifying as it now is. It is precisely in these apparently fruitless efforts and struggles to reach the goal of his lifelong ambition that the true nobility of his soul is brought to light. The disasters that he encountered, the reverses that he suffered, the rebuffs that he experienced, were the rich soil from which his most brilliant virtues blossomed into supernatural beauty — his remarkable humility, his utter unselfishness, and especially his heroic confidence in God. At times, it is true, we behold the heart of this apostle battling against impatience; we hear his soul crying out in its anguish for resignation; but, these struggles over, we find him resting peacefully in the arms of that Divine Providence, whose ways are not our ways, and which, he knew, bides its own good time for the execution of its secret designs. With this thought he was wont to console

himself. Never for a moment did he doubt the ultimate vindication of his views. Of his final success he was firmly convinced. Even in the most trying and discouraging circumstances, he believed in the future of his Congregation. To him its destiny was assured. Hence, we never see him abandoning his project. Every new failure merely spurred him on to seek another solution of his problem.

Thus, after the collapse of his first project to establish a Novitiate and a House of Studies in Rome, he immediately set to work on a new line of action.

As Rome with its many incentives to the religious life remained closed to him, he and Huebl realized that the most pressing duty confronting them was to foster vocations to the Congregation elsewhere, above all in the German-speaking countries. Austria and Protestant Upper Germany were not included in this plan. The countries of Central and Southern Germany, therefore, and the Catholic Cantons of German Switzerland were to be the scene of their endeavors in this direction. From this time, all his efforts sprang from the conviction, that if the future of the Transalpine Congregation was to be assured, a permanent foundation in German territory still under a Catholic government, and still inhabited by a devout and faithful people, was imperative. His later experiences in Southwest Germany and in Switzerland proved the correctness of this belief. In these countries there would have been no lack of numerous and promising vocations; but one obstacle was in the way: freedom of action was denied him.

In 1790, Hofbauer began to negotiate for a foundation in the County of Werdenfels, in what is now Upper Bavaria. In a letter to the Nuncio Saluzzo, dated July, 1790, the Saint writes that the funds for the purchase of this site have already been secured. He adds that this foundation " will prove very advantageous to the Church, for after a few years there will go forth from this house a host of trained laborers of our own nationality for the vineyard of the Lord." Father de Paola was not, at first, very much in favor of this foundation. He feared that its acceptance betokened disaster to the work at St. Benno's, which he wished to be retained. However, his fears were unwarranted, as Hofbauer himself no longer had any

intention of quitting this post entirely. What he wanted and insisted on as an absolute necessity was a German House of Novitiate. Cardinal Antonelli, the Prefect of the Propaganda, promised him every possible assistance. At the close of the following year the new foundation had all but become a reality, and, on December 4, 1791, Father de Paola wrote to Hofbauer: "I wish you success in your undertaking for the salvation of souls and the honor of God. But we are living in evil times, in a truly pitiful world. However, if you have the means to go to Germany, go, and may God be with you! . . . I am grieved over the condition of the Church. Who does not know the fury of the ungodly and the machinations of the unbelievers? In my grief I have recourse to the promise of Our Lord: 'The gates of hell shall not prevail against it.'"

It is probable that Hofbauer himself had intended to go to Werdenfels, leaving Huebl and the others in Warsaw. However, before he had made any final decision in the matter, the whole project had to be abandoned — for what reason, we do not know.

The only course now left to the Saint was to house the new candidates temporarily in the little convent of St. Benno's. There were plenty of applicants. For the most part, however, they were men who had failed in their attempts in Germany, and now sought success abroad. Still, even in these first years, Divine Providence sent him a number of very able and fervent recruits. The first arrival was Matthias Widhalm, a brewer from Vienna, who, it seems, had some time previously promised Hofbauer to join the Congregation. On his arrival at Warsaw, Widhalm visited the Church of St. Benno before calling at the convent. There his heart sank within him, and terrible fears and misgivings took possession of his soul. It was too much for the poor man, and he resolved then and there to return home without even presenting himself to Hofbauer. But at that moment Hofbauer providentially came into the church, and as he approached to greet Widhalm, a genial smile upon his face, Widhalm's fears vanished as if by magic. He did not leave, but became Brother Matthias, one of the most loyal companions of Hofbauer, and one of the best witnesses to the holiness of his life. He was

invested in the religious habit on August 4, 1787. His was the first investiture at St. Benno's.

During the same year the student Charles Jestersheim was received. A tall Saxon, quiet and gentle in disposition, and the soul of simplicity, the son of a wealthy family, Jestersheim later became a support to the community also in a temporal way. He prided himself on being the first Redemptorist trained outside of Italy.

Shortly after him came John Rudolph, a native of the County of Glatz, who had begun the study of Theology in Breslau. A Silesian Dominican also wished to transfer his allegiance to the Congregation, in which he found "the most regular observance and perfect community life combined with active apostolic labor." Hofbauer and de Paola sought to obtain for him the necessary permission to go over to the Congregation, but without success.

In order to make it more easy for the Superior of St. Benno's to receive new members into the Congregation, the Superior General did not hesitate to place him in a more independent position. On May 31, 1788, Hofbauer was appointed Vicar to the General "for all imaginable cases." The office of Vicar-General, which the Saint thenceforth filled for the Transalpine countries, was, of course, less an honor than a burden, especially as the youthful Vicar provisionally united many other conflicting offices in his single person, — Superior of his own Community, Father of the Orphans, School-Teacher, Novice-Master, and Lector. The difficulties of his position can readily be imagined; and no one realized better than Hofbauer himself how impossible a position it was.

On February 27, 1791, his first clerics, Jestersheim and Rudolph, were raised to the Sacred Priesthood by the Nuncio Saluzzo. Their number was augmented by the arrival at this time of Father Egkher, who had been ordained in Italy. The Community at St. Benno's, therefore, consisted now of five priests and two lay-brothers. Four other German students entered the novitiate: Rheinlander from Thuringia, Wichert from Warmia, Adalbert Schroeter from Prussia, and Bressler from Bohemia.

The Superior General watched with deep interest and much

satisfaction the growth of the first foundation beyond the Alps. "I congratulate you on all the work you have done," he wrote in one of his letters. "Would to God that I could visit you! Do not lose courage. Consecrate all the powers of your being to the mission which Christ has entrusted to you. God, for whom you are laboring, will give you the crown for which you hope."

And indeed, such words of cheer and heartening from their spiritual father in Rome were not unwelcome. The very trying circumstances under which St. Benno's had been transformed into a Redemptorist community, continued practically unchanged for several years thereafter. Material conditions were as bad as ever. Saluzzo helped the Fathers in every possible way. His report of their work to Pius VI was so favorable, that the Propaganda, beginning with the year 1791, made an extra annual allowance of one hundred scudi to the House of St. Benno's, and the Pope on this occasion declared: "It is quite evident that the zeal of their Founder has been handed down to these men." In spite of this assistance, however, Hofbauer, in a letter of 1793, still complained that the House was so poor that it could hardly supply candles, oil, and wine for the Church, and declared that had it not been for the encouragement of the Nuncio, he should surely have returned to Italy.

Disagreeable episodes, such as are of more frequent occurrence in the beginning of any great enterprise, added still further to his troubles.

One day in 1789, Francis Egkher, who had not yet completed his studies in Italy, unexpectedly appeared at St. Benno's. Father de Paola had sent him to his home in Lower Austria to settle some family affairs; but instead of returning to Italy after concluding his business, Egkher, without further permission, betook himself to Warsaw. No doubt he was very much surprised and chagrined, when Hofbauer immediately dispatched him back to Italy to finish his theological course. The incident had some painful consequence. Shortly after his departure an unpleasant friction, due probably to Egkher's wagging tongue, arose between St. Benno's and San Giuliano's. Each community accused the other of laxity in regular ob-

servance, St. Benno's being the greater sufferer and suddenly acquiring an unsavory reputation at Rome. Serious fears were entertained that Hofbauer was arbitrarily making changes in the Rule. Father Leggio needed no urging to write the Nuncio requesting him to make a thorough investigation of affairs in Warsaw. "We fear a new Congregation within the Congregation," he wrote, stating as the most potent reason for their anxiety, "because they are Germans." Unfortunately, for some reason or other, no letters were forthcoming from St. Benno's at this time, so that even Father de Paola became apprehensive. Indignantly he demanded to know whether they perhaps intended to make themselves independent; and he threatened to recall them at once, unless satisfactory explanations were sent to Rome.

The Procurator General was still sharper in his tone. His pique against Hofbauer invariably found the letters which the latter sent to Rome too blunt and coarse. A long and characteristic letter of Leggio's, dated September 14, 1790, must have been written with a pen dipped in venom. It contains a long, tabulated list of Hofbauer's so-called violations of regular observance, and very plainly threatens him with expulsion from the Congregation. Yet the righteous Italian exhibits no surprise that Hofbauer should have deflected from the straight and narrow path of the Rule, for how could any one who had spent scarcely a year in Italy be expected to know the true spirit of the Congregation? He is duly shocked when he recalls the all too rapid advances made by Hofbauer in his short career as a Redemptorist. "Novice, Professed Religious, and Priest, — all in one month," he vociferates; "and then, Vicar General beyond the Alps!" It was all too horrible for words. "Why, what are you aiming at?" he thunders. And, of course, he discovers a reason to lend color to his accusations: in Rome they had long since realized why he had left Italy — it was because Hofbauer could not brook having a Superior over him! And then, with paternal solicitude for Hofbauer's spiritual welfare, fearing perhaps that Hofbauer would miss the main point of his argument, he prays that his letter will be read with composure, and not "with the characteristic furor of Hofbauer." No doubt Hofbauer acceded to his request, and in the privacy

of his cell calmly weighed the content of this letter. Whether his reply to these accusations breathes the some calmness, we have no way of knowing, as, unfortunately, Hofbauer's letters to Leggio have not come down to us. It is futile, therefore, to attempt to form a correct judgment concerning the accusations brought against our Saint. Hofbauer, it must be confessed, was never wont to mince his words. When, in undertaking any work for the honor and glory of God, for the good of Holy Church, or for the best interests of his Congregation so dear to him, he did not find help where he had just reason to expect help, he often had to do violence to himself to control his temper. He believed and contended that in Italy the Church and the Congregation should be above all criticism, and in these matters was very exacting in his demands and expectations. Whenever he spoke out his mind on these subjects, there actually rang out from the pages of his letters the "*furor teutonicus*" which so kindled the ire of the Italians. That the Saint did not go beyond the bounds of propriety, however, is proved by the fact, that in this tilt between Hofbauer and Leggio, Father de Paola always sided with Hofbauer. After the Nuncio Saluzzo had sent to Italy an altogether satisfactory report of conditions at St. Benno's, the Superior General wrote Hofbauer a very consoling letter, begging him to pay no attention whatever to Leggio's threats of expulsion and the like, since Leggio was only the Procurator General and not the Superior General. "Inform Father Huebl of this," he adds, "as he seems to be very much upset and alarmed. And — forgive poor Leggio!"

Father de Paola's letters radiate fatherly affection and sincere concern for his sons in the distant North. When misunderstanding arose, he tried with kindness and gentleness to calm the ruffled waters.

Another painful incident that made a demand upon the prudence and kindly consideration of the General, happened at St. Benno's, in 1791. Brother Emmanuel Kunzmann, although he had taken the vows, without leave or notice left Warsaw. He immediately regretted his rashness, and from the place where he was staying, wrote to Father de Paola, begging forgiveness and pleading to be reinstated. Hofbauer likewise

wrote to the General in behalf of the poor Brother, assuming, it seems, most of the blame for Brother Emmanuel's departure. The episode affected him more grievously than anything he had yet been called upon to suffer. He feared, it seems, having driven the good Brother to desperation by his rigor, and heart-sick and repentant, he asks the General's permission to lay down his office and return to Rome. From a passage in Father General's reply, we get some idea of what really happened: "A Superior," writes Father de Paola, "must act with gentleness and kindness as well as prudence; otherwise he renders himself insupportable to his subjects. Therefore, check your temper, treat the subjects kindly, and do not frighten them away by too great severity. However, if the office of Superior disturbs your peace of mind too much, as you say in your letter, I cheerfully grant you permission to appoint Father Huebl in your place. You may act in this matter entirely according to your own judgment." His request to return to Rome, however, the General refused to grant, as such would mean the ruin of all the work they had begun at Warsaw for the glory of God and the good of souls. Father de Paola left Brother Emmanuel Kunzmann free to make Italy his future home, if he feared to return to St. Benno's, assuring him that in Italy he would be received as a son. But Brother Emmanuel returned to St. Benno's. The old friendship between him and Hofbauer suffered not in the least: they became more intimate than ever they had been; and during the remaining thirty-five years of his life Brother Emmanuel remained faithful to his vocation.

Father de Paola was not to be Hofbauer's Superior very much longer. On July 17, 1790, Father Leggio communicated the following gratifying news to the Vicar-General: "On June 30, the Neapolitan Fathers, hitherto separated from us, obtained the King's consent to adopt our Rule. Our Congregation, in consequence, now numbers eighteen houses." The *Regolamento* being set aside, no other obstacle stood in the way of a reunion. Efforts to effect this reunion had been energetically made on both sides; but only after a number of hindrances had been removed, could a General Chapter be convoked for March, 1793. Father de Paola's letter to St. Benno's under date of December 29, 1792, reads like a Father's

touching farewell to his beloved children. He promises them his continued support, saying: "I have always loved you."

The General Chapter convened on March 1, 1793, at Pagani. The reunion of the Redemptorists in Naples and the Redemptorists in the Papal States became a fact. De Paola resigned, and Father Blasucci, a near relative of his, was elected Superior General of the entire Congregation. "This morning Blasucci was elected," de Paola wrote to Warsaw on March 12. The joy of the Congregation knew no bounds. At St. Benno's Hofbauer held a solemn service of Thanksgiving with the *Te Deum*. To the new General he wrote: "May the separation, which caused so much scandal, be buried in the archives as food for the worms. We pray God to fill Your Paternity with the spirit of our venerable Founder Liguori." The first letter of the new General was hailed with joy at St. Benno's. "I cannot tell you," Hofbauer wrote in reply, "with what joy we welcomed Your Paternity's letter, or how greatly your words have strengthened and consoled us here."

Amid the universal rejoicing even Father Leggio forgot his rancor, which, it is only fair to say, was more on the surface than a serious thing of the heart. Friendliness again beams from his letters to St. Benno's, and he even protests his willingness to go to Warsaw. Perhaps Hofbauer's invitation to come to St. Benno's was merely one of his flashes of wit. Leggio replied: "If you feel that you really need me, I will not hesitate to come, though I know I shall die on the way." But another office awaited the good Father. Shortly after this was written, Leggio was appointed to an Italian bishopric.

During the same year, affairs in Warsaw also took a more favorable turn. The Polish Diet of Grodno manifested an interest in St. Benno's. The King was much disposed to place the work of his protégés on a secure footing, and to this end he promised them ample support and a new building. But owing to the sad financial status of the decadent kingdom, little could be done. The Diet of Grodno, with generous recognition of what had hitherto been accomplished at the personal expense of the Fathers, accorded them a yearly allowance of four thousand florins. At the same time the King and all the representatives of the different parties approved the Con-

gregation and admitted it "once and for all time" into Poland. "This great favor," Hofbauer remarks in his report to Blasucci, "we owe to the kindness and untiring efforts of His Excellency, the Nuncio Saluzzo. May the Congregation ever bear his valuable services in grateful remembrance." It was the last opportunity given Saluzzo to use his influence as Nuncio in behalf of St. Benno's. He had just been appointed Apostolic Delegate of Urbino, and was about to quit Warsaw and go to his new post of duty. The Saint, in the letter of thanks and leave-taking which he addressed to Saluzzo at Grodno, refers to a prospective foundation in Urbino, — a proof that the two men had not yet abandoned their idea of a German-Polish College in Italy.

St. Benno's, the first Transalpine foundation, could now be looked upon as secure. Although Hofbauer bore the brunt of the burden during the first years in Warsaw, a great deal of credit is due to Father de Paola and to Saluzzo for the success of the enterprise. In his modesty, Hofbauer gave all the credit of founding St. Benno's to Saluzzo, and touchingly thanked Father de Paola, who was just retiring from office, for all the trouble he had endured for the sake of his subjects in Warsaw. These two benefactors, however, now disappeared from the scene, and more than ever the whole responsibility for the labors at St. Benno's rested on the shoulders of the Vicar-General. The greatest obstacles to success had been surmounted; and, while the material needs of the house were not as yet sufficiently provided for, he could write to the new General that affairs there were now at least in better running-order than ever before. His community, too, was increasing slowly but steadily in numbers. In the course of the year 1793, the four German novices mentioned above made their religious profession. Toward the end of 1793, two more promising students were in the novitiate — Thomas Allander, a Prussian, and John Podgórski, the first Pole to enter the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer. Both were pious young men of unspotted character and talent above the ordinary, as Hofbauer declares in his report to Blasucci.

Father Blasucci expressly confirmed the Saint in his office of Vicar-General. Hofbauer appointed Father Huebl Rector of St. Benno's, and Father Jestersheim Minister of the House.

CHAPTER II

PASTORAL AND CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES IN WARSAW

IN THE early nineties, Hofbauer seems to have been less occupied with plans for new foundations. This may have been owing to the war that had broken out. Austria and Prussia, by declaring war against France, in 1792, once more fanned the smouldering embers of unrest into a mighty conflagration. Europe thereupon witnessed that long series of upheavals which so seriously hampered the life-work of our Saint. Warsaw became the scene of some of the most terrible convulsions of this epoch of history.

The impulse of life from within, after the First Partition, could no longer save Poland from ruin. The death-knell of the ill-fated Kingdom had already been sounded by the Court of Catherine II of Russia. To prevent further reforms, the Empress called the Federation of Targowic into existence, in 1792, and sent an army of sixty-four thousand men into Poland. The Polish troops that tried to stem the invasion were utterly defeated. On September 5, all pastors of churches and all Superiors of convents in Warsaw were required to appear before the delegates of the Federation and take the oath of allegiance. In January, 1793, Russia and Prussia decided upon the Second Partition of Poland. The Imperial Diet at Grodno was obliged to confirm without cavil or opposition the cession of the prescribed territory. New sources of dissension and rupture soon arose. The reduction of the Polish army, demanded by the Powers that were parties to the treaty, so inflamed the people that they leaped to arms and revolt. Kosciusko gained a notable victory not far from Cracow. It was only a momentary triumph, but it revived the hopes of the Poles, who thought the moment had arrived for breaking the bonds of the invaders. Wilna and Warsaw seethed with rebellion of the fiercest sort. During Holy Week in 1794, bloody riots took place, in which three thousand Russians were slaugh-

tered by the maddened crowd. The Poles, however, were themselves repulsed and crushed by their reinforced opponents, and paid the price of their resistance with a more bitter fate than before. Warsaw was besieged by the Prussians from July to the middle of September. Two weeks after their withdrawal, the Russians arrived under the leadership of Suworow, and in a headlong assault captured the suburbs of Praga.

In a letter to Father General, Hofbauer described the anxiety he experienced during those evil days: " Hardly had we been freed from the siege of the Prussians, when there followed another by the Russians, and while this latter was not so long in duration, it was more frightful in its result. At the storming of the suburbs of Praga, more than fifteen thousand men, women, and children were brutally massacred. Our House is built on the banks of the Vistula which separates us from Praga; hence we ourselves had to be the unwilling witnesses of these bloody scenes, as they were enacted just across from St. Benno's. We suffered no harm from the thousands of missiles hurled into the city by the Russians; only three bombs dropped on the roof over our heads, but, thanks be to God, none of them exploded. All the others passed far and wide of the House and Church. Nevertheless, our lives were in constant peril."

When the bombardment was at its height, the Saint made a vow to go on a pilgrimage to the grave to St. John Nepomucene, if Warsaw were spared. On November 8, Suworow marched over the Vistula bridge into Warsaw, but the city was spared.

For the next twenty months Warsaw was under Russian administration. The efforts of the Russians to gain the goodwill of the people and by friendly measures to secure a lasting hold on the city, proved of great benefit to St. Benno's. Major-General Boxhoewden, Adjutant of the Empress and Commandant of Warsaw and of the Provinces occupied by the imperial troops, resolved to establish a great educational Institute in Warsaw, " in order," as he said in his official announcement, " to give the people of the country a convincing proof of the motherly concern of their Ruler, Her Majesty the Empress, for their spiritual welfare, and at the same time to give to

parents of all classes the best opportunity of educating their children." The Magistrate of the city urged the Commandant to complete the new School for the Poor at St. Benno's. Buxhoewden in company with the Nuncio Albertrandi and a number of officials, visited St. Benno's, and was so favorably impressed that he readily assented to the Magistrate's proposition. Accordingly, he at once ordered the State allowance which had fallen into arrears on account of the disturbances of the past few months, paid up. In addition, he directed that two sums, amounting in the aggregate to forty thousand florins, be drawn from the Educational Fund and given to the Bennonites for the construction of a large school-building.

Buxhoewden's order was dated November 1, 1795. A short time previously, in October, the Powers had met to settle the details of the Partition, and after lengthy negotiations and much wrangling, Warsaw had been adjudicated to the Prussians. Consequently, as the Vicar-General wrote the Pagani, " on July 7, 1796, we were obliged to swear allegiance to the King of Prussia."

For the next ten years the Redemptorists of St. Benno's remained subjects of Prussia. There was a gradual return to normal conditions; but the city had suffered terribly. Actual hostilities had ceased, but when the storm-clouds of war lifted, it was found that the glory of a fair city had vanished with them. From 1787 to 1792, the number of inhabitants had increased from ninety-six thousand to one hundred and twenty thousand; from the latter date to 1805, it dwindled to sixty-eight thousand. Warsaw, once the residence of kings and the capital of the government, now became one of the frontier cities of Prussia with large military outposts. The prices of even the ordinary commodities were prohibitive. In spite of the reduced population, not only were the old taxes not reduced, but new ones were added. Warsaw was an expensive city to live in.

The change in government brought with it unfavorable results for St. Benno's inasmuch as the measures introduced by Buxhoewden for the enlargement of the institutions were indefinitely held in abeyance. Still, the question of providing more room at St. Benno's became more urgent from day to day. In June, 1795, about the time that Warsaw was given

over to the Prussians, Hofbauer sent a petition to the new Governor, Count Hoym, in which, after explaining that this Institute was devoted to purposes of public utility and setting forth its straitened circumstances, he proposed that the forty-five thousand florins voted to the Bennonites by Buxhoewden be set aside as a capital, and the interest thereon be added to the annual allowance of four thousand florins. "This arrangement," he declared, "would render it considerably less difficult to meet the current expenses." The problem of providing more room, he thought, could be solved in another way. "Near the church," he stated, "is a commodious house, half of which stands on the church property. This ground was unjustly alienated some years previously. If this house could be purchased for educational purposes, it could easily be remodeled into classrooms for the pupils and living-rooms for the faculty." We cannot say how these proposals were received, but it is certain that the sum settled upon St. Benno's by the Russian administration never came into Hofbauer's hands. The grant was revoked by the Prussian Government. Frederick William III allowed no increase of the allowance formerly granted by the Polish Government, and promised further aid only after the school conditions would have been regulated.

But the Bennonites undoubtedly procured larger quarters about this time, for a plan of their property, drafted in 1799, shows that besides the two one-story houses, they possessed also a two-story house. This, like the others, was not very large. Still, it was a sign of progress. The new Government seems to have been not less favorably inclined toward St. Benno's than had been the former administration. This is evidenced by the fact that the institutions for neglected youth at St. Benno's were acceptable even for their disciplinary value. The Government very likely recognized in the Bennonites a strengthening of the German element in the city, and therefore looked upon them as an asset. At all events, St. Benno's was neutral ground, a gathering-place for Poles and for Germans, who there alternated at the divine services.

Thus St. Benno's came forth from all these changes not only unscathed, but with new strength. Let us now look into condi-

tions at St. Benno's at this time, and see what were the fruits produced by the labors of the Fathers.

We have no further information about the development of the School for the Poor. A report of St. Benno's, written in German during the first year of the Prussian régime, reads as follows: "At present the Institute supplies forty children with food, twenty of them also sleep there. About two hundred receive tuition. Instructions are given in German, Polish, and Latin, in religion, history, geography and natural science. A short time ago an industrial department was added. The Institute has, moreover, a few boarders, among them a relative of the King of Poland, who pays two ducats a month for him. . . . The boys read and write German fairly well, and some of them have taken up drawing. The teachers are very able men." [1]

The spiritual labors of the Fathers at St. Benno's were remarkably fruitful during these years of political changes. The sentiments of the people had gradually undergone a complete transformation. They were soon convinced that the foreign Religious at St. Benno's entertained no national or political aims, but were concerned only about the salvation of neglected youth. Once the people became convinced of this, their changed attitude was soon in evidence. The great turning-point in the history of St. Benno's, however, dates from the days of terror in 1794. Hofbauer mentions in one of his letters that their church was overcrowded from day to day. Soon the Fathers were in greater demand by the Poles than by the Germans, although at that time only Podgórski, an angelic young priest, delivered short Polish sermons to the people. At this time, too, more Poles were applying for admission into the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer. At the beginning of 1795, the Community numbered eight Fathers, all of whom were Germans. Two of the five clerics, however, and four of the seven novices, were Poles, and there were two Polish Juvenists. The people had come to recognize their apostle. St. Benno's was no longer, as a few years previously, an almost isolated German national church: it was now the very heart and center of religious life, not only for the whole city, but for

[1] *Monumenta Hofbaueriana.* I. 82.

its environs as well. No more convincing evidence of this change can be cited than the unusual and sudden increase in the number of Communions in a year — from two thousand in the first year to twenty thousand, in 1796, and over one hundred thousand since 1800. The church, which seated about one thousand persons, was greatly overtaxed on Sundays. Those who could not find place within the church stood praying outside in the cemetery or in the street. New devotions and services, such as frequent novenas, were introduced. Hardly a day in the week passed without a High Mass and special sermon. The Poles are fond of long and solemn services. Hofbauer had his reasons for complying generously with this wish of the poor and downtrodden people. In 1800, the development of the order of divine services at St. Benno's reached its climax in the so-called " Perpetual Mission," which became renowned far beyond the limits of Warsaw.

We shall let St. Clement, the founder of this glorious work, speak for himself. In a report prepared for the Nuncio at Vienna, in 1802, Hofbauer briefly states the order of the divine services. " On all Sundays and holydays there is a sermon at five o'clock in the morning for servants, who on account of their duties cannot attend the divine services at a later hour; for their convenience Holy Mass is said immediately after the sermon. On week-days, this sermon is omitted. Every day at six o'clock there is a Mass of Exposition, during which the people chant hymns. After the Mass an instruction is given to the people in Polish. During these instructions and sermons Masses are constantly being said, so that those who do not understand German or Polish, or who have not the time to remain for a sermon, may not be deprived of the benefit of the Holy Sacrifice. Every day at eight o'clock there is a High Mass with Plain Chant, after which there are two-sermons — the first in Polish and the second in German. Then the school children come to the church and the Solemn High Mass with musical accompaniment is celebrated. With this the morning services are concluded. In the afternoon at three o'clock the confraternities chant the Office of the Blessed Virgin. At four o'clock there is a German sermon, followed by Vespers solemnly chanted, and followed in turn by a Polish sermon.

Finally, there is a Visit to the Blessed Sacrament and to the Blessed Virgin Mary publicly made with the faithful, according to the method of the Servant of God, Alphonsus de Liguori. On week-days the afternoon services begin after school hours. Every day at five o'clock there is a German sermon. Then follow in order, a Visit to the Blessed Sacrament, a sermon in Polish, the Way of the Cross, and congregational singing of hymns in honor of the Passion of Our Lord and of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Lastly, there is an Examination of Conscience for the people, the Acts of Faith, Hope, and Charity are made, a short sketch of the life of the Saint whose feast is celebrated on the morrow is read with suitable applications, and then the Litany of the Blessed Virgin is recited, after which the people are dismissed and the church is closed."

This program was followed at St. Benno's from eight to ten years before the foundation was suppressed. Every day there were five sermons, three in Polish and two in German, to which were added on Sunday two catechetical instructions. There were also three High Masses daily, and a number of other services. We may be tempted to ask, if this was not overdoing a good thing. But we must remember that the various services were attended by different congregations of people. Nevertheless, this program far exceeds what is ordinarily given to the faithful in Catholic churches. A multiplicity of divine services, such as can hardly be crowded into the space of an ordinary mission nowadays, formed the regular daily order at St. Benno's for ten years.

The superabundant pastoral zeal of the Saint, as one might term it, may be understood in a measure, if we consider to what a low ebb religion and morality in Warsaw had fallen at the time. Whenever the Vicar-General touched upon this topic, he did so in the most drastic terms. "Scandal and vice have reached their climax here," he writes, "and one can hardly see how matters can be remedied. From the clergy down to the poorest begger, society is rotten to the core. It is to be feared that God will remove the candlestick from this place."

The Saint did not exaggerate in the least. All the moral evils of our modern large cities were at home and made wel-

come in Warsaw. Frivolity and unbelief were rife among the higher classes, ignorance and immorality ran riot among the lower element. Even among the ordinary civilians conditions must have been very discouraging, since Hofbauer hesitated to place the girls coming forth from his orphan asylum in service in Warsaw, but as a rule procured employment for them in Germany. The aftermath of the recent wars and disturbances was still further lowering the standard of public morals. The Prussian police-records depict the conditions at Warsaw in very dark colors: "People without work roam about the city in great hordes; thievery and robbery belong to the order of the day." Praga in particular stood in evil repute. Not infrequently dying persons could not make their will, because no one would venture across the bridge of the Vistula. One well acquainted with the times gives the following frightful picture of the upper classes of society: "Warsaw at this time rushed madly along in the wake of the triumphal chariot of the French Revolution. Sunk in corruption and steeped in impurity after the orgies of its disreputable King Stanislaus II, Warsaw, with its metal-roofed palaces, its adulterers in the salons, its revolting violations of the marriage-bond for money, cared little about God or about the safety of the fatherland, so long as it could plunge into dissipation and indulge in revelry, pleasures, and amusements. Even to the present day the régime of Southern Prussia is in bad repute among the Poles on account of its shocking riches, its married priests and monks that belonged to the Freemasons, the shameless nudity of its women, and its divorces, which had become quite common." [2]

In the opinion of Hofbauer, all the pastoral work done in Warsaw was far from sufficient to counteract these evils and stem the flood of immorality. There was no lack of churches, convents, or priests. In the city itself, there were fifteen convents of men alone, and about four hundred priests. But the Saint was by no means satisfied with their pastoral efforts. "Except in the churches of the Vincentians and the Reformati," he wrote on one occasion, "there is never more than one sermon a week, and that is preached without spirit and in a style that is quite unintelligible." He complained

[2] Prusinowski, *John Clement M. Hofbauer* (Grodisch, 1864), p. 22.

most of all about a certain Order that had come originally from France, had been in Warsaw for more than a century, and was in charge of one of the largest parishes in the city. These religious had Jansenistic tendencies, and actually kept the faithful from the Sacraments.

To extraordinary needs extraordinary remedies must be applied. This was the simple logic which gave birth to the "Perpetual Mission" at St. Benno's. The Fathers were not permitted to go about from place to place or from church to church giving missions. Sermons in public places, according to the Italian custom, on market days, which were essayed by Hofbauer, were expressly forbidden by the Prussian Government. "Another way of laboring for the salvation of the people in the city, had to be devised," he curtly and dryly remarked in a report to Father General. He made St. Benno's his headquarters, and endeavored to compensate the people for the loss of the occasional mission by conducting a "Perpetual Mission" in his own church.

Details were arranged, not haphazardly, but with due consideration for the temperament of the people and the needs of the hour. Solemnity and magnificence were of prime importance. The means flowed in abundantly. The days when Hofbauer had to complain that candles, oil, and wine could hardly be provided for the church, were now to be no more. The rich and the poor contributed to the church with open-handed liberality, and the donations kept pace with current expenses. And these expenses were by no means slight, for the lively faith of the Saint considered no expenditure too great, no splendor superfluous, when there was question of enhancing the beauty of divine service or observing the prescribed liturgy of the Church. On the more solemn feasts processions were held. A contemporary enthusiastically describes these impressive ceremonies. "Most magnificent," he writes, "was especially the Corpus Christi procession. . . . It differed in no way from other processions of this kind, except that there was no booming of cannon. But the stirring sermons that were delivered on this occasion in both languages not only resounded in the ears, but sank into the very souls of the hearers. The church and its surroundings were literally covered with candles

and flowers; twelve acolytes carried censers and incense, a host of boys clad in white and gold, strewed flowers before the Blessed Sacrament. The priests, who walked immediately before the Blessed Sacrament, wore their richest vestments. The outstanding feature of the solemnity, however, was the canopy, which was carried by six men of the nobility. Princesses and other ladies of the noblest families had worked it. It was embroidered with flowers and with figures symbolic of the Holy Eucharist. Its gold ornamentation alone was valued at three thousand florins. A troop of young men, clad in silver and gold, and representing the cherubim of heaven, followed after the canopy, under which the celebrant held aloft in view of the worshiping throngs the God of our altars." On account of the limited space, " only fifty of the most devout and respectable members of the Young Ladies' Sodality were chosen to take part in the procession. Many of these had taken the vow of chastity. They were clothed in white, wore red sashes, were without vain ornaments, carried lighted candles, and marched under the Sodality banner borne by one of the members. During the Mass these young women, with lighted candles in their hands, received Holy Communion from Father Hofbauer, who always conducted the entire ceremony himself. The procession was preceded by a sermon and the High Mass, and followed by a short exhortation, whereupon the *Te Deum* was chanted and Benediction given. At the Blessing all bowed down to the ground, holding only their candles aloft, and the national colors were dipped in a triple salute to the Blessed Sacrament."

All this display of pomp and splendor was inspired chiefly by considerations of a pastoral nature. The Saint remarked on one occasion later on, that if one wishes to win over an ignorant people to God, one should surround the divine services and all public devotions with all possible grandeur and solemnity. " The public ceremonies of the Church," he would say, " draw the hearts of the people by their pomp and magnificence, and by degrees win them over in spite of their prejudices; the people hear with their eyes more than with their ears: they are at first captivated, then captured by the sight. This I experienced again and again at Warsaw."

The pulpit and the confessional he always regarded as the principal arena of the priest's activity. During all the divine services, therefore, Fathers were to be found in the confessionals, which were invariably thronged with penitents. Many of these persons journeyed for twenty hours to St. Benno's, in order to make their peace with God. Catechetical instructions formed the very soul of the " Perpetual Mission." Hofbauer's zeal manifested itself particularly in the pulpit. He never wearied of preaching. The admonition of St. Paul, to " preach, exhort, in season and out of season," he obeyed to the very letter; for he was firmly convinced, that in many of the Christian countries of Europe the Gospel had to be preached anew. The sermon-topics at St. Benno's were arranged according to the seasons of the ecclesiastical year, so that in the course of a year the entire field of Catholic teaching on faith and morals was covered. Most of the sermons, amounting to about two thousand in the course of the year, allowed thorough and detailed treatment of their subject-matter. As these sermons were delivered in both languages, German and Polish, a double mission was in progress throughout the year. To many of the people, however, St. Benno's served as a mission in the stricter sense of the term, becoming to them a spiritual awakening, a season of extraordinary grace, and a rare opportunity of making sure their election and salvation. This was especially true of those who came from a distance and remained in the city for a short time. These, after attending the exercises for three, five, or eight days, returned to their homes renewed in spirit. The people of the city who visited St. Benno's daily, there received safe and systematic guidance in the spiritual life and in the ways of perfection, for the Fathers were not content to see the people observing merely the absolutely essential precepts of Christianity; they were concerned about, and as earnestly inculcated, also those lesser practices which make for the upbuilding of the interior man and are the stepping-stones to the devout life. Accordingly, the faithful were trained to a deep religious, interior piety — one might almost say, to a conventual life. Not only was the daily examination of conscience made with them, but during the Ember Days one day was set aside as a day of recollection or retreat, and once a year the Spiritual Exercises

were held for eight days. If the whole city was to be renewed in spirit, it was not sufficient that only individuals here and there should again be brought to the fulfilment of the most necessary duties of a Christian, but a class of Catholics must be created, who would in turn, as so many Apostles, be able to influence those with whom they came in contact.

Of excess, from a Catholic point of view, there can be here no question. Some pious individuals probably did overstep the bounds of moderation, and neglected the duties of their state for sentimental devotion. For those persons who were religiously inclined St. Benno's must have possessed an irresistible charm. The people were wont to say: "At St. Benno's the year passes by like a single day." Even the most praiseworthy arrangements are not at times secure against abuse. What Hofbauer intended by this abundance of sermons and devotions was very laudable and necessary, namely, the thorough and lasting conversion of a city people that had become morally and religiously perverted. There may be diverse opinions about details, but in the main the "Perpetual Mission" at St. Benno's will ever remain a classical example of pastoral work in the care of souls in large cities. In this radical departure from the antiquated and traditional order of divine services, which may meet the demands of the patriarchal conditions of a small country parish but does not come up to the requirements of a large city; in this praiseworthy endeavor every day and every hour to render it convenient for classes of people in cities so variously employed, to attend instructions in the faith and to receive the sacraments: will be seen nowadays, more than in those times, the ideal for the cure of souls in large cities — an ideal that is impracticable only on account of conditions in general. In the final analysis, the Saint, with a deep knowledge of his times, did nothing more than adapt his pastoral work for the care of souls to those times. He set up an extraordinary program of spiritual aids to meet the needs and dangers, altogether new, of more recent times in church and religious matters. Where there was question of eternity and the salvation of souls, he knew no conservatism and no misplaced affection for old customs, but was ever ready for timely innovations.

Hofbauer realized full well that church celebrations alone do not constitute the cure of souls in a large city. Sermons, Solemn High Masses, Vespers, and grand Processions were only single numbers of his program. He was a reformer on a large scale. On closer observation his activities seem quite modern. All the means and devices employed in these our own days to promote the cause of Catholicity, were tried and turned to the best advantage by him, though, quite naturally, on a smaller scale. And if he did not make a more extensive use of them, the fault lay, not with the man, but again with the adverse conditions under which he labored. The school, the orphanage, organization, and the press — all these were pressed into service by him, when he set out to build up the Kingdom of God anew in the hearts of men.

His school for the poor, in particular, was a great support to him in his pastoral labors. The pupils became real apostles in their homes and families. Cases are on record of boys who on their knees begged their parents to go to confession, accompanied them to the church, and waited near the confessional until father or mother came out radiating the happiness of new-found peace. In all this Hofbauer made use of the simplest means to work upon the hearts of these little ones. He remarked later, that in the beginning it is sufficient to read the Gospel every day to the children, for his experience at Warsaw had taught him that this reading in itself always produces wonderful effects. Before school he himself frequently assembled the children, and sang a hymn with them or recited with them short, fervent prayers which they could easily remember.

He had the care of the girls even more at heart than the care of the boys. It was chiefly through his efforts that the authorities took measures to drive back into their dark haunts the women of loose character, whose number had so rapidly increased in the city. He found that the source of this immorality, which was spreading its insidious poison among the female sex, was the almost total lack of education and training of the girls, of the lower classes in particular. " They have no opportunity to learn anything," he complains in a report, " and therefore they are so easily led astray." Consequently, he

gave his attention above all to the training and schooling of the girls. In 1794, he opened an Industrial School for Girls. The most devout of his young ladies who were willing to devote their time and energy to the work, he formed into a society. These ladies were called the Sisters of St. Joseph, followed a community life similar to that of the religious convents, and received no remuneration for their work. The object of their Society was to educate poor girls in the elementary branches, to instruct them in German and Polish, to teach them to knit, sew, spin, and embroider, to train them in other occupations suitable to their age and sex, and above all to fashion them into devout and pure young women. More than three hundred young girls were educated at St. Casimir's, as this industrial school was called. As was the case with a number of the boys at St. Benno's, so also, here at St. Casimir's from twelve to sixteen of the more destitute girls lived at the school, while others were provided with food and clothing from the institution. The older orphan children, after completing their education, were placed in service with respectable families. The children that had graduated from St. Benno's or from St. Casimir's were organized into two flourishing societies — the one for the young men, and the other for the young women.

Another society which proved a great help to him in his work was the Congregation of Oblates which our Saint established, and which was really a band of lay-apostles. From the very first days of his priestly activity at St. Benno's, he resolved to affiliate with his own Congregation a congregation of laymen, similar to the Third Order of St. Francis. He received into this Congregation, as Oblates, persons of proved virtue of both sexes, and from every station of life. Priests also were admitted, but formed a congregation by themselves. It was thus that the Congregation of Oblates was gradually formed. The members continued to live at home with their families, but they bound themselves to a daily meditation and to other practices of the spiritual life. The main object of the Oblates was the Lay-Apostolate. They sought to defend the Church, the Catholic faith, and Christian morality by counteracting the evil tendencies of the times. Self-sanctification was looked upon as the most necessary condition in this work, and

the chief means to its success. The manner in which these ends were to be attained was suggested and explained in the conferences which were regularly given them. As a principal means to further the good work, the Oblates were to make it their duty to spread wholesome literature. Although Hofbauer never devoted himself to writing, he understood full well the power of the press and the value of good literature. His Fathers at St. Benno's were constantly engaged in translating and publishing approved and new ascetical works. The Saint even set up a small printing plant at St. Benno's.

To the Congregation of Oblates Hofbauer owed in large measure the success of his pastoral activities. These disciples of Hofbauer were soon to be found in many of the wealthiest families in the city and in all grades of society, and through them the good seed was sown and yielded fruit a hundredfold in places which he himself could never reach.

Such, in broad outlines, was the Apostolate of Hofbauer in Poland. We shall have occasion later on in the course of this biography to supplement this brief sketch of the days at St. Benno's with further particulars. Such records of his labors in Warsaw as have been preserved to us, are in many respects incomplete and obscure. But this general account of his activities there, as we have thus far presented it, must suffice for the present. How far did he not extend his labors beyond that which was imposed upon him! The school for the poor and the Sunday services for the Germans, under those difficult conditions, would alone have been enough to engage all the time and energy of a zealous priest. As with his plans for new foundations, so here also he made plans and evolved projects that extended far beyond the ordinary sphere of priestly care for souls. His aim was not merely that of the faithful pastor who endeavored to do all in his power for the parish and the people confided directly to his charge. He had come to a large city, in which the merest glance revealed to him spiritual misery beyond the power of man to measure. Not merely to draw the parish of St. Benno's to the Heart of Christ, but to lift the whole city of Warsaw from its degradation, to make that city religious and moral once more, and to do this thoroughly and with all possible speed, — this he recognized

more clearly from year to year to be his God-given task, and this task he hoped, with God's help, to be able to accomplish. With three dollars in his pocket, he took over the care of a church that was buried in dust. He was shunned, maligned, jeered at, and hated by the people. Only a few years had elapsed, and among all the churches in Warsaw St. Benno's stood out as the veriest gem and paragon, the center and heart of a religious movement that has no parallel anywhere or at any time in that epoch of the Church's history.

CHAPTER III

JOURNEYS IN QUEST OF NEW FOUNDATIONS (1795 and 1797–1798)

DURING the first eight years of his activities at Warsaw (1787–1795), the Saint, so far as can be ascertained, never left the city. During the following thirteen years, that is, from 1795 until his final sojourn in Vienna, in 1808, his regular work in any one place was repeatedly interrupted by long journeys. Since these journeys, as a rule, had for their object the establishment of a large House of Novitiate and of Studies as a nursery for his Congregation, they were unusually tedious and wearisome. They were undertaken, not for the purpose of giving missions, but for the purpose of selecting suitable sites for new foundations. Why Southern Germany and Switzerland were the chief objectives of these journeys, has already been pointed out.

The first foundation, however, was neither in Italy nor in Germany, as Hofbauer had always wished, but in the Duchy of Courland; and it was made at a time when this Province, by virtue of the Third Partition of Poland, was incorporated in the Russian Empire.

As early as 1789, the Bishop of Courland had applied to Hofbauer to send several of the Fathers into his diocese. At the time the Vicar-General could do no more than refer His Lordship's petition to Rome. There, in 1790, it was decided to send four Fathers to Courland, a decision, which, for reasons unknown, was never carried into effect. Since that time the Bishop of Courland had repeatedly renewed his petition for help. Many of the forty-two German parishes in Courland were without pastors, and those pastors that were still living were either sickly or advanced in age, and hence unable properly to discharge their duties. This latter condition prevailed, for example, at Mitau, where there were seven thousand Catholics. The pastor, Canon Goldberger, a feeble old man,

implored the Bishop for assistance. The Bishop offered the post to Hofbauer, with the result that toward the end of 1794, serious negotiations concerning the transfer of the parish to the Redemptorists were in progress. The number of subjects now available at St. Benno's would have permitted the Saint to view the proposition favorably, had not other considerations caused him to hesitate. Mitau possessed only a Protestant College. This fact alone counseled caution, since it meant that not only the pioneers for Courland, but all the recruits for the future work there, had to be supplied by the small foundation at St. Benno's. But his principal reason for demurring was that he preferred to keep his few subjects together and hold them in reserve for a foundation in Germany, where he reckoned on a speedy increase in numbers. His eyes were turned toward the West and the South, not toward the North. He even had France in mind at this time. "As soon as peace has been restored there," he wrote to Blasucci, "we shall surely obtain a foundation. I have friends who are exerting all their influence to establish the Congregation in due time on French soil."

In the interim, however, Canon Goldberger had personally applied to Blasucci, and in his letter had painted the distress of the Church in Courland in such gloomy colors, that the Superior General's views were decidedly different from Hofbauer's. In a long and touching letter sent from Beneventum under date of February 27, 1795, the General tried to dispel the Vicar-General's misgivings concerning Mitau. "I tell you, my dear son," he wrote, "it is the will of God that you send two Fathers of your house at once to Mitau, — one of mature age, and a younger man as his companion. They are to go in advance of others, like St. Francis Xavier, who began the missions in India and Japan. Accept the place that you are sure of, and let go the one that is uncertain. Direct your attention to Mitau, and leave France and Germany to the care of the Lord. Send laborers into the country which the Lord Himself seems to point out to you. . . ." And further on in the same letter, he continues: "My age and my duties prevent me from laboring in the service of God as I should like. Were it not so, I would devote myself entirely to the missions in

those places where the harvest of souls would be greatest, the protection of God more visible, the merit more abundant, and the reward increased a hundredfold on account of the more arduous labors entailed. In God's name be not disobedient like Jonas, — have a care lest in fleeing from the command of God, you be swallowed by the whale. Labor, therefore, as a good soldier of Christ, who will reward you."

But such grave warnings were no longer necessary. Blasucci's letter crossed Hofbauer's message announcing that he had decided in favor of Mitau. "It is as clear to me now as the light of the sun," he declared, "that God wills this work, and that it would be a sin not to accept this foundation." His conviction that Courland was in dire need of help, and the prospects of an unusually rich harvest of souls, had gained the victory. He was encouraged by the report that a strong movement back to the Church had set in among the Protestants of Courland. "The present pastor of Mitau," he wrote to Father General, "although he is not a remarkably learned man, receives at times more than one hundred converts into the Church in a single day."

In June, 1795, the two Fathers whom he had selected for this work, Rudolph and Wichert, assumed charge of the parish church in Mitau. The cleric Kaminski, a native of Warsaw, was sent with them as companion. Hofbauer soon received the most encouraging news from Mitau: "There is plenty of work, as the people are grossly ignorant of even the most fundamental truths." But the Fathers speedily won the confidence of these people. Even Lutherans living at a distance brought their children and their sick to the missionaries and besought them to lay their hands upon them and bless them. Canon Goldberger continued to be, nominally, the pastor; Rudolph and Wichert acted as his assistants and attended to the care of souls. It is evident, however, that an independent and larger foundation was planned. Hofbauer had bound himself by formal contract to send seven more Fathers to Mitau within a reasonable time, on the supposition, no doubt, that the results of the work there would come up to his expectations. The Saint was planning and hoping to make this northern post another St. Benno's for Courland.

Almost simultaneously with the departure of the little delegation for Mitau, the Vicar-General quite unexpectedly received the long-desired offer of a foundation on German soil. From a lady of Warsaw, a penitent of Hofbauer's, the Provost of the Chapter of Lindau on the borders of Lake Constance, had learned of the marvelous activities of the Saint, and probably also of his desire to establish a foundation in Germany. The Provost immediately promised his help in founding a House in the diocese of Constance.

At this time also, Monsignor Gravina, the Nuncio to Switzerland, invited Hofbauer to attempt a foundation in that country, and even dispatched a special messenger from Switzerland to present this petition at St. Benno's. Hofbauer still owed St. John Nepomucene the pilgrimage to Prague, which he had vowed to make, if Warsaw was spared, when that city was bombarded by the Russians. He therefore resolved now to fulfill his vow and, on the same journey, to look over the situation in Constance and in Switzerland.

Actual warfare in the West had ceased, owing to a suspension of hostilities. In April, 1795, Prussia and France made peace at Basle, and Austria was making overtures for a truce. During this armistice which seemed to promise a general peace, Hofbauer decided to set out with Huebl for Lindau, making the journey by way of Prague. Consequently, the personnel of St. Benno's community was to be considerably reduced during the next few months. Of the eight Fathers, two had gone to Mitau. With Hofbauer and Huebl away, there remained only four Fathers at home, one of whom, good Father Egkher, was unable to do more than say Mass. Jestersheim, Rheinlander, and Bressler had accordingly to shoulder the whole burden of the work, which was constantly increasing. But, as we have repeatedly observed, the Vicar-General subordinated everything else to his plans for the future of the Congregation. Thus, on the last day of August, 1795, he and Huebl, together with the clerics Allander and Adalbert Schroeter, left Warsaw, and set out on their journey to Prague.

The four pilgrims reached Prague on the fourteenth day of September. Freed for a time from the arduous labors at home, the Saint once more gave himself up entirely to his

devotions. With his companions he made a novena in honor of St. John Nepomucene, whom he held in great veneration, and whom he had chosen as the Patron of his House in Warsaw. In a letter to Father General, he described with childlike delight the sanctuaries of the city, and particularly the tomb of St. John. "I could not refrain from tears," he wrote, "when I beheld the magnificent tomb of the Patron Saint of Prague."

Allander received the Diaconate and Schroeter the Subdiaconate at Prague, after which both returned home, while Hofbauer and Huebl continued their journey by way of Ratisbon to Lindau. According to all accounts they went also to Switzerland. No further particulars, however, either of their wanderings, or of any negotiations relative to new foundations, are available. The events of the time probably compelled the Saint to alter his plans and think of a speedy return home. The war was renewed. Jourdan marched across the Rhine in September, and Austria determined to continue the struggle without the aid of Prussia. That lower Germany, too, would eventually become the battle-ground of the opposing forces, was foreseen as inevitable. This actually came to pass in 1796. It was no time, therefore, to be thinking of establishing religious foundations within that threatened territory.

Hofbauer and Huebl reached Vienna about the middle of October, and spent the next two or three weeks in the city of their old University days. They had not seen the Capital in nine years. In that time the city had witnessed several changes in its régime. Emperor Joseph II now rested in the crypt of the Capuchins, and his brother, Leopold II, had died after a brief reign. Francis II now ruled over the destinies of Austria.

The prospects of establishing the Congregation in Austria were again seriously examined. The change of rulers had affected the existing government very little. Though personally a devout Catholic and an enemy of the Reformers, Emperor Francis clung fast to the ecclesiastical policy of his predecessors. Even in cases where he was inclined to make a change, he lacked the courage to unseat the Josephist bureaucracy

from the saddle. Of this infirmity of purpose on the part of the Emperor, an interesting example was furnished by Hofbauer's friend, Baron von Penckler. Shortly before this time, Penckler had started a movement to reintroduce the missionaries and the missions. During the advent of 1793, the Emperor permitted the Servite Fathers from Vienna to conduct a mission in His Majesty's parish, Maria-Enzersdorf, "in order thereby to arm his subjects against principles hostile to State and Church." Cardinal Migazzi had previously secured the verbal permission of the Emperor. The mission was a great success, and the parish sent a vote of special thanks to His Majesty. Thereupon the Servites and the Carmelites conducted similar exercises in many parts of the diocese, and in each case there was an enthusiastic response on the part of both the people and the clergy. The result of these experiments was exactly what Migazzi feared: the State officials became indignant. The Government of Lower Austria protested that the missions had been prohibited even under Maria Theresa, reminded the Emperor that Joseph II had stricken the very word "mission" from the public documents, and declared that the arm of the Police was more effective than all these missions and pilgrimages. The result was that an Imperial Decree, of February, 1795, made the permission for such exercises dependent on the consent of the Government. This, of course, was tantamount to an absolute prohibition. The ever-increasing demand for priests in the various dioceses of Austria, on the other hand, seemed to Hofbauer decidedly favorable to his plans. Ways and means for increasing the number and for effecting the reformation of the clergy, became matters of grave concern to the Government after the reforms of Joseph II had destroyed all respect for the priesthood and closed all the sources of priestly vocations. But the new measures adopted by the Government to correct this evil, did not even touch the root of it. The Bishops were still prevented from regulating the studies and the training of the young theologians, and the lectures at the University, which the seminarists were obliged to attend, were rife with the spirit of Josephism. However, with these efforts of the Government to fill the vacancies in the ministry, the admission of a new Congregation of

Priests did not seem so utterly hopeless as it had been ten years earlier, when the second tidal wave of Josephism unleashed its blind fury in Austria and, like the unreasoning and unreasonable thing it was, swept all the convents from the fair fields of the Church. From 1792 to 1800, many of the religious houses, whose preservation was desirable merely as an adjunct to the secular clergy, had to be closed for lack of members. Ruffo, the Nuncio at Vienna, who heartily endorsed Hofbauer's plans, seems to have judged conditions very propitious and even made a definite proposition to the Saint. At his advice Hofbauer presented himself to the new Bishop of St. Poelten, who was just in quest of help. Sigismund, Count Hohenwart, who but a year previously had exchanged the bishopric of Trieste for that of St. Poelten, was a central figure in the episcopacy of that day. All his efforts were directed toward building up a numerous and worthy clergy. As he was likewise the Vicar-Apostolic, his first desire was to found an institute for the training of chaplains. To conduct this institute Hohenwart requested Hofbauer to give him several Fathers, who were at the same time to conduct the Spiritual Exercises for the diocesan clergy. But Hofbauer declined, principally because he could not supply the men required for this work. The deciding factor, however, was his pessimistic estimate of ecclesiastical conditions. He was of the opinion that so long as the clerics were obliged to attend Universities in which Josephist views and principles were in the ascendancy, all labor for the betterment of the clergy would be vain. " Therefore," as he declared in a letter to Father General, " we deferred the undertaking until better times."

This visit of the Saint to Vienna, however, had for its object, not so much the establishment of new foundations, as a desire to visit the many friends and benefactors to whom St. Benno's was so deeply indebted. Besides the Princes of the Church, Migazzi and Ruffo, we have already become acquainted with Penckler and Francis Schmid, his oldest friends in Vienna. Schmid, after his ordination, in 1788, and a short career in the active ministry, had been recalled to Vienna by Migazzi, who entrusted to him the spiritual direction of the seminary. During the difficult beginnings at St. Benno's, Schmid was liberal

in his donations to his former friend. "He is our greatest benefactor," Hofbauer said of him in a letter to Blasucci.

Other intimate friends of Hofbauer's were: the old Count Lantieri; Count Sineo della Torre, Rector of the Italian Church in Vienna[1] who frequently took care of the correspondence between Warsaw and Nocera dei Pagani, where Blasucci resided; and especially the devout and very zealous Baron Joseph von Beroldingen, who was Canon of Speier and Hildesheim, but who lived most of the time in Vienna. It was probably during these weeks in Vienna also that Hofbauer became acquainted with the ex-Jesuit Albert Diesbach, to whom he frequently refers with so much respect in after years.[2]

Somewhere in his letters Hofbauer speaks of a "circle" which Diesbach in his zeal for the honor and glory of God, had formed. Diesbach was at this time the center of a small, select group of zealous men in Vienna. Their object was not only personal sanctification and mutual edification, but, judging from Hofbauer's account, opposition to the evil tendencies of the times. The Saint himself was a member of this group; hence we may infer, that the friends whom we have just mentioned, were among the principal members that made up this

[1] Count Sineo della Torre was one of the most prominent members of the Society of the Faith of Jesus (also called Fideists and Paccanarists), who adopted the Rule of the Jesuits and strove to continue their work as far as possible. Father Sineo later became the founder of the Swiss and German Provinces of the Society of Jesus. (See Heimbucher, *Orders and Congregations of the Catholic Church,* III. p. 90, note 2, and p. 103.)

[2] Joseph Albert Diesbach, born in 1732, the son of a Calvinist nobleman, served first as an officer in the Sardinian Army. After the death of his young wife, he became a Catholic and entered the Society of Jesus in 1759. In the Society he displayed an indefatigable zeal as a missionary and writer. It sometimes happened, that he preached in German, French, and Italian in different churches on the same day. Italy, France, and Germany were the scenes of his labors. He was also the tutor of the younger sons of Leopold II. When the latter went to Vienna, in 1792, to take up the reins of government, Diesbach in a voluminous Memoir, which he presented to him, expressed himself very frankly concerning the blunders of Joseph II. As a personal friend and admirer of Alphonsus de Liguori, he contributed very much to the rapid spread of the Saint's works in France, Switzerland, and Germany. We do not know for certain at what precise time Hofbauer made the acquaintance of Diesbach. According to Haringer, it was during his years of study, but to me this seems improbable, at least it cannot be proved. (For further particulars about Diesbach, see Haringer, *Life of Clement M. Hofbauer,* p. 16, note 2.)

small circle. How they labored, or what they accomplished, we cannot say. This alone we do know, that Penckler introduced the circle or society founded by Diesbach into Vienna under the name of " The Christian Friendship Society," giving it as its chief object the spread of good books. As head of this society, he conducted a circulating library in Vienna, of which we find occasional mention made in Hofbauer's letters.

What the Saint gained by associating with these men, or what they gained from their association with him, is not known. That to Diesbach, his senior by twenty years, he was indebted for much wise counsel and encouragement in his own labors, is to be taken for granted, and appears from the manner in which Hofbauer was wont to speak of him. During his last years in Vienna, Hofbauer frequently visited Diesbach's grave in Maria-Enzersdorf, and he hoped that his own body would be laid to rest and be allowed to await the Day of the Resurrection beside Diesbach's mortal remains.

The men of this group, on their part, clung with reverence and admiration to Hofbauer. From certain particular instances we can learn that Hofbauer's very appearance as well as their first short conversation with him, made a profound impression upon those of his contemporaries who, as men of experience, were all acquainted with the world and with human nature. Thoughtful, serious-minded persons at once recognized in him an extraordinary character, and usually found themselves under the spell of his personality before they were aware of it. Only on this supposition can it be explained how this simple priest and religious, without fame, rank, or fortune, lacking all claim to distinguished ancestry, his brow as yet uncrowned with the halo of meritorious endeavor or success achieved, could exercise upon his fellow-men so great an attraction.

In this group of loyal friends Hofbauer found the fullest recognition of his aims, the warmest interest in his work, and the most active support of his plans. Next to Penckler, it was especially Canon von Beroldingen, who in the following years promoted Hofbauer's undertakings as zealously as if his personal interests were bound up with their success. At their very first acquaintance, on the occasion of this visit, Beroldingen proposed a foundation on his own feudal domains in

Southern Germany. The plan apparently gave much promise of success, as even the Nuncio wrote to the General and declared himself in favor of it. But like many another project, it was never realized.

On November 9, 1795, Hofbauer and Huebl set out on their homeward journey to Warsaw. They spent the remaining weeks of November at Znaim and Tasswitz, where Hofbauer attended to some property affairs. The land at Muehlfraun, which he had inherited from his mother, was sold. The rest of the journey was made with an increased personnel. A number of people had begged him to admit their boys into the Institute at St. Benno's. Accordingly he took with him four boys ranging from ten to fourteen years of age, among them his nephew, young Priesching. Two assistant teachers from the neighborhood likewise joined his party, with the intention of entering the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer. The father of one of the new pupils drove the whole party in his wagon to Cracow. They had no suspicion that in the meantime the government officials of Moravia-Silesia were very much concerned about them. By taking six young persons out of the country without permission from the authorities, the Vicar-General had come into conflict with the strict Emigration Law of August 10, 1784. The Magistrate of Znaim was not aware of this audacious violation of the law until after Hofbauer's departure. At once the entire police force of the district between and including Znaim and Teschen was set on the trail to avert from the State the disaster impending from the loss of a few of its male subjects. This time Hofbauer barely escaped: by the end of November he was safely across the border. The search for the fugitives, however, was not given up for some time thereafter. Later he was made to realize with what uncanny memories the Austrian police were endowed.

Before the middle of December, 1795, Hofbauer and his companions reached Warsaw. He and Huebl had been absent for three months.

Unfavorable reports from Courland were awaiting the Vicar-General at St. Benno's. The Russian Government in the new Province acted with such high-handed intolerance in Church matters, that Hofbauer thought seriously of recalling his breth-

ren from Mitau. In a letter which he wrote to his friends in Vienna immediately after his arrival in Warsaw, he presents a very dark picture of affairs in Courland, and asks their advice concerning matters under the changed conditions. Father Sineo's reply from Vienna, dated January 23, 1796, among other things reveals the close relationship that existed between the Saint and his friends. "We have repeatedly thanked God," Sineo writes, "for deigning to send you to Vienna, thereby giving us an opportunity of becoming acquainted with you. We have often spoken of you, and until your recent letter reassured us, we were fearful lest some mishap had befallen you." Then after a detailed discussion of the questions submitted by Hofbauer, he adds: "On the twenty-seventh of this month we shall have a large friendly gathering to consider these matters. We shall then send you a report of our findings. We shall carefully take into consideration everything touching the glory of God and the salvation of souls. Remember us often in your prayers; for we shall always remember you. Though separated in body, we shall ever remain united by that strong bond which neither distance nor death can tear asunder."

At Mitau itself no obstacle was put in the way of the Fathers in the prosecution of their ministerial labors; in fact, their sphere of activity was extended from day to day. But it was made extremely difficult for them to remain in communication with St. Benno's, as the Russian Government prohibited, under the severest penalties, all exchange of letters between the local clergy and their Superiors abroad.

For the next year and a half, that is, until the midyear of 1797, Father Hofbauer resided at Warsaw. He did not, however, lose sight of the prospective foundations in Southern Germany and Switzerland. Even before his return to St. Benno's, he had acquainted Father General with the attempts he had made to secure these new houses. This account, it seems, gave rise to some misunderstanding. In Pagani the brethren were evidently under the impression that Hofbauer actually intended to establish these new foundations in the diocese of Constance, in Switzerland, in St. Poelten, and on the domains of Beroldingen simultaneously, whereas these projects

were to be taken up separately, and that one selected for a permanent foundation, which seemed to hold most promise. The others were either to be dropped entirely, or to be held over to a more favorable season. His Italian brethren shook their heads doubtfully. "We admire this, but we do not approve," wrote Tannoja, in his *Life of Liguori*, with reference to the report of Hofbauer's journeyings in 1795. Father Blasucci, whose temperament did not at all resemble that of his impulsive, enterprising young cousin, Father de Paola, though himself in duty bound to warn the Vicar-General, with whom he was not personally acquainted, against excessive zeal in spreading the Congregation. To this end he addressed a very earnest letter to Hofbauer on January 8, 1796. Suspicion was even cast upon the Saint's motives, inasmuch as it was hinted, that, having grown tired of Warsaw, a secret longing for his home really lay at the root of all these endeavors. The Saint, in a long letter, cleared up these misunderstandings, and took occasion, once and for all time, to state candidly his real purpose in seeking new foundations. So far as he himself was concerned, he wrote, he had no longing whatever for his native land; on the contrary, he would welcome the opportunity to return to Italy, there to occupy himself solely with the affairs of his own soul and to die in peace. "Hopes such as these are laid up in our hearts and oftentimes are to us a source of much consolation, especially the hope of one day establishing a House in the vicinity of Rome, to which the German and Polish Fathers who have grown old in the Lord's service will be able to retire and prepare themselves in peace and meditation for a happy death." Hinting somewhat pointedly to the wofully deficient knowledge of geography displayed by the Italians in this controversy, he adds: "Switzerland is as far from my own native country as Rome is from Switzerland. How then can I be accused of longing for my home, when I desire to go to Switzerland? I have far nobler motives, I hope." He emphatically declares that the foundations in question were not of his own seeking. "They were offered us by persons wholly unknown to us — persons of whose very existence we did not know. Furthermore, I believe that in these critical times so

hostile to the Church and to religion, the spontaneous offer of new foundations is not a matter of chance, but a call from Divine Providence." No, neither a selfish attachment to his native land, nor disgust with Warsaw, had moved him to enter upon these projects. Both these imputations he repudiates as motives altogether unworthy of a laborer in the Lord's vineyard. Neither had he been urged principally by a desire to extend the Congregation, but rather and only by the hope of advancing the glory of God, of saving immortal souls, of spreading the Kingdom of God upon earth, and, in so far as lay in the power of man, of widening the scope of its influence. "And granting that we actually did seek these new foundations," he goes on, "can we in thus ensuring the salvation of souls come anywhere near equaling the efforts our enemies are constantly putting forth to ruin them? With shame and confusion do I read of the advances which the United Brethren are making the world over." He then adduces statistics to show the growth of the sect known as the United Brethren both in Europe and in the countries beyond the seas. "They all but work miracles," he says in conclusion, "putting to shame the children of light." And as for the countries in which he is laboring, he writes, that the Church is in a far more deplorable state than any one would believe. "Everywhere there is a woful ignorance of even the most sacred things. So great a dearth of priests exists in these countries, and in Bohemia particularly, that many parishes are without pastors. Scandal is on a rampage, but there is no one to prevent it or repair it. Unbelief is injected into the very atmosphere, but the enemies of the Church are unmolested as they go about preaching their false doctrines. But this is the worst evil of all — there is a sad lack of laborers, for the convents are still closed. . . . What a blessing it would be, therefore, if we could secure a House in Switzerland, in which zealous missionaries could be trained and to which numerous recruits would be drawn to continue the good work after we have laid down our burdens and have passed into eternity!"

The apostle had spoken; and so eloquently and convincingly had he spoken, that Father Blasucci not only brushed aside all doubt, but felt the spirit of the veteran missionary

within him again kindled. "I thank Almighty God," he writes in reply, "for having cast His eyes upon us poor, weak human instruments, and chosen us to do great and useful things for His Church. I assure you, it is not my will, that you should refuse foundations which Divine Providence itself offers you, no matter in what part of the world they may be located. On the contrary, I quite approve your accepting them, be they offered in Germany, in Switzerland, in Poland, in France, or in India. If God asks us to cultivate these portions of His vineyard, He will not fail to send you both the laborers and the means required for the work. When the Almighty Himself selects us to spread His Church, we may not say Him nay; and if the envoys of hell penetrate to the most distant parts of the globe, the messengers of Jesus Christ may not hold back or suffer themselves to be outdone in zeal. I therefore commend and approve your zeal and your prudence, and pray God to give you strength to labor as a true disciple of Jesus Christ."

To the Vicar-General, Switzerland was the land of fair promise. In May of this same year, 1796, another messenger came to Warsaw to invite him to that country. Hofbauer could hold out no immediate hopes to him, as an early journey thither before the end of the war was out of the question. Moreover, urgent petitions for assistance had come from Mitau. "Our missionaries in Courland," he wrote in the letter of July 26, 1796, quoted above, "are almost succumbing under the burden of their work. We may not leave them alone any longer; we must send some of the Fathers to help them." Four days later, on July 30, a sad occurrence shattered all his plans. On that day three of his young Fathers, Rheinlander, Allander, and Bressler, died at St. Benno's. Three days later Father Kraus followed them into eternity. What the cause of these sudden deaths was, is not known. It was probably some accident, perhaps ptomaine poisoning, or something similar. One can imagine the Saint's suffering during these days. The death of any of his brethren always deeply affected him and was a severe trial to him. Within four days he lost one half the number of his Fathers. He had consequently to shoulder the ever-increasing burden of the work, with only Huebl and Jestersheim to assist him. Under

these circumstances, his intentions of sending help to Courland or of settling in Switzerland had to be abandoned.

But Divine Providence had already determined to compensate him for the loss he was about to sustain. On July 22, a week before the mysterious deaths at St. Benno's, four French clerics, who had previously studied theology, were invested as novices. They were Joseph Constantine Passerat, Nicholas Lenoir, James Vannelet, and Peter Mercier. Like many other French priests and clerics, they had fled from their native land at the outbreak of the Revolution in order to complete their studies in Germany. They had studied last at Wuerzburg. When the war was resumed, no longer feeling themselves safe there, they had gone on to Warsaw, where they soon learned to know the Fathers at St. Benno's, and were so impressed by the zeal and spirit of these sons of Alphonsus de Liguori, that they begged for admission into the Congregation. After a short novitiate they pronounced their religious vows on the Feast of St. Stanislaus, November 13, 1796.[3]

[3] Of these four Joseph Constantine Passerat played an important part in the subsequent history of our Saint. Passerat was born at Joinville, in the Province of Champagne, in 1772. He was about to enter the University of Paris as a theologian, when the Revolution broke out. In the seclusion of his home, he studied philosophy under the guidance of his parish priest. In 1792 the revolutionists cast him into prison as a suspicious character, but consideration for his youth and the intercession of influential personages effected his release. When war was declared by Austria and Prussia the young man of giant stature was forced into the army. At first he was a drum-major but later was promoted to the rank of quarter-master. Even during those strenuous years his spiritual nature manifested itself. He took advantage of the leisure afforded by his duties to withdraw from the guard-house and devote himself to prayer and silent communication with God. During the winter of 1792–1793, while on an expedition into Belgium, he escaped. He had waited long for this opportunity, as he had no intention of serving the ends of the Revolution. This step marked the beginning of a roving, restless career. For a short time he studied at Namur. His petition to enter the seminary at Liége was refused for fear of the French. In Treves he was welcomed, but the spirit of the teaching there made him suspicious, and he left after six weeks. For the same reason his sojourn at Muenster was likewise very brief. In Augsburg he felt more at ease, and there put himself entirely under the guidance of the ex-Jesuits and resolved to live according to the Rule of St. Ignatius. In 1795 he went to Wuerzburg and there entered the seminary established for emigrant clerics. But as he did not feel safe from the French there, he and his three friends mentioned above, went to Warsaw toward the end of 1795, where they became acquainted with the Fathers at St. Benno's.

Thus the situation was not entirely hopeless, since the advent of new recruits to fill the vacancies, promised a full quota of laborers in the near future. The community at St. Benno's, at the end of 1796, numbered only three Fathers; but there were fourteen professed clerics, of whom seven were Poles; and there were four novices and two candidates. The Vicar-General was satisfied with most of his young family. Three of the clerics — Passerat, Mercier, and Podgórski — had already attained a high degree of perfection, he stated in a letter to Father General. Naturally, therefore, he demanded more from these children of grace than he did from the rest, especially from Passerat, in whom he discovered a predisposition to unusual sanctity of life. Speaking humanly, the tests and trials to which he subjected the young Frenchman were severe in the extreme, but their purpose was to ground him firmly in humility, that virtue which lies at the very root of all true holiness of life.

In April, 1797, seven of the clerics were ordained priests; among them were Passerat, Mercier, and Lenoir. In the following June, Podgórski, the first Pole, was raised to the sacred priesthood. About this time the war clouds began to disappear from the horizon in the South. The First War of the Coalition came to an end in April, when Austria concluded the preliminaries of peace with Napoleon at Leoben.

In the South the roads were now open. Hofbauer had a sufficient number of Fathers at his command in Warsaw. There was no longer any reason for delay, and so the negotiations which had been suspended two years previously, were resumed with the authorities in Switzerland.

The recent invitation to settle in Switzerland had come from the government of the Canton of Switz. The plans called for the establishment at Wollerau, a small town on the southern borders of Lake Zurich, of a Latin School, and an Orphan Asylum modeled after that of St. Benno's. Hofbauer was to furnish the priests. The motive that influenced him to accept this offer was the prospect of securing numerous vocations to his Congregation.

Accordingly, on July 11, 1797, Hofbauer and Father Adalbert Schroeter left Warsaw. Two others set out in their

company — a French priest named Viezy, probably an emigrant, and a student from Warsaw by the name of Kopsch, who intended to study at Munich. Father Huebl remained at St. Benno's. It was the first time since the beginning of their friendship that these two, who seemed inseparable, had to part.

The Saint spent the last week of July and the whole month of August in Vienna. Again he visited Mariazell. The prospects of a foundation in Austria were so seriously considered at this time, that he did not rest until he had secured an audience with the Emperor. "On my journey through Vienna," Hofbauer wrote in his report of this audience, "I had an audience with His Majesty the Emperor. I represented to him that we were Germans, and that I was on my way to Switzerland to procure new subjects, so as to be in a better position to be of service to the Fatherland and to respond to his call later on. His Majesty assured me that he would have our Institute examined into. He must have heard of our labors in Warsaw. He asked me whom I had here in Vienna that he could question concerning us. I told him that Baron Counselor von Penckler was a friend most kindly disposed to us. 'It is well,' His Majesty replied; 'I shall speak with him. It is a pity your number is so small.' 'I shall endeavor to increase it as soon as possible,' I said. Whereupon His Majesty graciously dismissed me."

The limited number of subjects, therefore, was seemingly the only obstacle in the way of admitting the Congregation into Austria at this time. The Emperor evidently intended to entrust the direction of a college to the Fathers from St. Benno's, of whose good work he had been informed. Foremost among the measures taken by the government to remedy the dearth of priests was the opening of new colleges and theological institutions. The colleges, old and new, were to be supplied, as far as possible, with Religious teachers. Taught by sad experience, the Government was now inclined to stress the importance of religion and morality, though of course only as a disciplinary measure. But the old policy of countermanding every move made by the Church to extend its authority and influence, still remained in full force.

The Vicar-General saw the realization of his dream approaching ever nearer. His wish "to increase, to multiply" reached its height after he had received the Emperor's sanction for his plans.[4]

Toward the end of August, they continued their journey to Switzerland. On the way Kopsch resolved to enter the Congregation and accompanied the Saint to Switzerland as a candidate for the novitiate. Traveling by way of Munich, Landsberg, and Lindau, they came to Constance, where they were handed a very favorable letter of recommendation by the Vicar-General of the diocese, Count Bissingen.

Toward the middle of September, Hofbauer and his companions arrived at Wollerau on Lake Zurich. The months that

[4] It is a question whether Hofbauer, even with the consent of the Emperor, could have established a house in Vienna. How often did not the Josephist authorities find means of frustrating the best intentions of the monarch! The following instance throws much light on prevailing conditions in Austria. In January, 1798, the Trappists and Trappistines of Valsainte (Switzerland, Canton of Friburg) were obliged to flee on account of the French. On their way to Russia a large number of them, about one hundred and seventy persons, passed through Austria. Here the poor refugees found a welcome, not only among the people, but even from the Emperor, who offered them a convent in the vicinity of Pilsen. But the disgruntled Josephists succeeded in hampering the Trappists by at least enforcing in their regard the prohibition forbidding the religious orders to receive novices. In consequence of this measure and still worse trickery on the part of the authorities, the refugees declined the proffered asylum and continued their journey to Russian-Poland. (See Victor Pierre, *Le Clerge Français en Allemagne pendant la Revolution: Revue de Questions Historiques,* LXIII., 1898, p. 177.) Something similar happened in the case of the Paccanarists in Austria, who were more successful than Hofbauer in their efforts to spread out, because they bore the esteemed name of the Society of Jesus. Re-inforced by the Fathers of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, who were founded by Tournely, they secured foundations in Bavaria, Holland, and Italy. Their great benefactress, the Archduchess Maria Anna, obtained a convent for them in Rome, and also a college for the clerics of the Society who were still pursuing their studies, — the very college that Hofbauer had vainly tried to obtain. In Austria these Fathers had a foundation near Vienna, and a second foundation in Prague, which they opened in 1798. But in spite of their great benefactress they did not succeed in procuring the permission to receive novices, as we find mentioned in the correspondence between Hofbauer and Beroldingen. Hofbauer seems to have been in close communication with the Paccanarists; Beroldingen considered him well-informed with regard to their affairs, and asked him for information concerning them (after Sineo had left Vienna). The Archduchess Maria Anna was interested also in Hofbauer and his plans. Beroldingen in one place suggested a union between the Redemptorists and the Paccanarists, but we cannot say what was Hofbauer's attitude toward this suggestion.

followed in Switzerland developed into a veritable martyrdom for the Saint. A whole series of untoward circumstances reduced him to an extremity such as perhaps he had never yet experienced. We have no record of particulars. All that we know is, that he was in dreadful straits, so that he and his companions had to suffer from hunger, and that he himself fell dangerously ill. What caused these eventualities, it is hard to imagine. At St. Benno's there was great uneasiness. Communications from Switzerland had ceased abruptly, leaving the brethren at Warsaw to wonder what had happened to the wanderers. Father Jestersheim, who would have given anything in the world to be permitted to accompany the Saint to Switzerland, mentions in a letter to Wollerau, that in their concern about the Saint they could not wait till the postman reached St. Benno's, but sent each morning to the post-office to see if there was any letter from their spiritual father, so as to satisfy their curiosity and to refresh themselves with those precious lines as at a limpid fountain. "But alas!" he continues, "for many days we were disappointed." He fears, "lest illness or some calamity has befallen them, and caused this painful silence. Pardon me, dear Father, but I am all distracted over it, and do not know what to think. My intention in writing you was merely to send you my best wishes for the New Year and my congratulations for your approaching feast-day; but I have strayed from that intention. What good things shall I wish you? Nothing else, dear Father, than as perfect a love for God as St. Clement had, so that you also may follow in the footsteps of your great Master."

In the meantime the crushing communication of December 6 arrived from Wollerau. The consternation at St. Benno's was all the greater, as Huebl and Jestersheim had unintentionally added to the sorrow of their spiritual father. In their letter to the Saint, they had remarked that they would hail with delight the news that a foundation had been established in Switzerland. This casual remark, the outgrowth of their enthusiasm and of their interest in the Saint's plans, was interpreted by the latter as meaning that at St. Benno's they would be glad if he did not return. Crest-fallen and mortified, Hofbauer, in his reply now humbly begs permission to return home. There

is here a glimpse of the human side of the Saint. When the spirit is weighed down by bodily suffering and the soul wrung with mental anguish, one is apt to be oversensitive. At such times, it is not hard to misinterpret motives and to become suspicious. Even the Saints are not altogether immune from these absurdities of human nature. Needless to say, the suspicions of the Vicar-General, who was ill and depressed at the time, were entirely without foundation. "My God," Father Huebl immediately replied, "how can you imagine that I or any one else here would not gladly see you return to us? How would such despicable conduct correspond with the love and gratitude that I and all of us owe you? It is especially your ill health that causes us so much concern, and I wish for nothing more sincerely than to see you among us again, and that as soon as possible. Perhaps Divine Providence has reserved a double blessing for this undertaking, when it is attempted at some future time. In the meantime, be convinced of this one thing: your own sufferings do not afflict you so much as they afflict us, for we know from experience, that even when trials and sufferings lie heavily upon you, you never think of sparing yourself, but impose upon yourself more than nature can bear. And I am all the more aggrieved, because I know that so long as you continue sceptical about our desire to have you here and the welcome that awaits you on your return, you will only add to your misery and waste your strength in needless worry, and thus ruin your health completely. I shall send you some money as soon as possible. At present we have only seven ducats on hand."

On the same day, Father Jestersheim wrote as follows: "My dear Father, do all in your power to recover your health, for if that be lost, everything is lost, and we shall never be able to carry out our projects. On your return, I shall have in readiness everything that may be necessary to restore your health. . . . Only, come home, where every one is eagerly awaiting you, and where all your children will welcome you with open arms. Please write often, so that here at St. Benno's we may be assured that you have been freed from this sorrow that is eating out your heart."

Of the labors of the Saint in Switz we know nothing except

that at least the school had been started. He himself had gone to Innsbruck to purchase the necessary school-books. Other journeys during these months, evidently undertaken in search of a suitable site for a foundation, took him to Friburg in Switzerland, to Constance, to Immenstadt, and to Lindau. His meeting with Father Joseph Helg, the founder of the Sisterhood of the Perpetual Adoration, had a marked influence on his plans for the future. These Sisters had several convents in Switzerland, and one in Jestetten, on what was called Mount Thabor, in the vicinity of Schaffhausen. Hofbauer visited this place and found it entirely to his liking. The Episcopal Curia at Constance as well as the Government of Prince Schwarzenberg immediately agreed to let him have it. Schwarzenberg even offered the Saint a sum of three thousand florins in advance on condition that besides engaging in the usual spiritual labors of a priest, he would take over the direction of a Latin school, as there was no such school in all Klettgau.

Full of promise as this offer seemed, no immediate steps were taken to clinch it. The development of political events pointed to danger ahead and prompted the Saint to get away from these parts with all speed and return to Warsaw. The price of food was constantly rising, and disturbances among the masses were feared. The annexation of Switzerland to revolutionary France was just under way. The events of 1798 proved that these were not baseless fears. The three forest-towns of Uri, Schwyz, and Unterwalden offered a desperate resistance to the invader, and it was not until far into the month of September, after streams of human blood had crimsoned the soil, that the revolutionary forces succeeded in quelling the opposition.

The Vicar-General departed from Wollerau about the middle of February, 1798, taking Kopsch with him. Schroeter and Viezy were to follow shortly after by another route. Ratisbon was agreed upon as the meeting-place. Hofbauer traveled to Augsburg by way of Innsbruck and Partenkirchen, and thence to Ratisbon by way of Munich. There was a twofold reason for this circuitous route. In Partenkirchen negotiations for a new foundation were on foot. This was probably the place proposed by Werdenfels, in 1790. The project had evidently

been taken up anew. Very probably it was not until he had arrived at Augsburg, that Hofbauer decided to travel to Ratisbon *viâ* Munich. The purpose of this detour was a visit to Professor John Michael Sailer. Sailer, as is well known, had been unexpectedly relieved of his professorship at the Dillingen High School, in 1794. Since then he had been living in retirement, making his home, at the invitation of a friend, in the spacious Maltese Castle at Ebersberg, near Munich. "There, under the tall linden-trees in the garden of the castle," as he himself tells us in his autobiography, "he forgot all the sorrows which blind zeal and ignorance had brought upon him." In public circles, however, Sailer became a much-discussed personality. His downfall attained a significance that extended far beyond the walls of the Dillingen High School. In their judgment of this man, his contemporaries ranged themselves into two parties bitterly opposed to each other. Some claimed to see in his activities nothing more than personal intrigue; others regarded him as the mouthpiece and defender of the Enlightenment, to whom the training of theologians could not safely be entrusted. His opponents included not only several of the professors of Dillingen, who had directly brought about his removal, but also the ex-Jesuits of Augsburg, and the Administrator of the diocese of Augsburg, the Vicar-General Nigg. It was from these men, with whom he was intimately acquainted, that Hofbauer first learned of the Sailer affair.[5] His first information concerning Sailer, therefore, came to him from the lips of Sailer's opponents.[6]

This fact must be borne in mind in judging Hofbauer's attitude toward Sailer. The nature of this information may be

[5] In Augsburg, which the Saint frequently visited during these journeys, he was probably the guest of the ex-Jesuits, who conducted the School of St. Salvator. Hofbauer makes particular mention of Father (Maximus) Mangold, S.J., referring to him as one of his friends in Augsburg. The latter was the last Provincial of the Bavarian Province of the Society. He died in 1797. (Placidus Braun, *History of the Jesuit College in Augsburg*, 1882, p. 201.)

[6] This was also Sailer's opinion. In a letter (which to my knowledge has never before been published) to Dr. Ringseis (Landshut, on the feast-day of our Crown Prince, August 25, 1820), he writes among other things: "Good Father Hofbauer has allowed his mind to be filled with these stories only by some Professors in Augsburg who are opposed to me, and who by their calumnies have brought about my removal."

gleaned from the subsequent conduct of the Saint. He resolved, in justice to Sailer, before pronouncing sentence on him, to speak to him personally, and so to discover "what might be regarded as favorable and what as unfavorable in the many contradictory reports concerning this man."[7]

On the way to Ebersberg, however, he probably bethought himself differently. He indeed called on Sailer, but, recalling all that he had heard about him, he did not deem it prudent to prolong his visit beyond half an hour. In other words, he contented himself with a mere friendly visit. Hofbauer appears to have made a very favorable impression on Sailer, who seems to have suspected the original purpose of Hofbauer's visit. It was probably with a view to changing the Saint's opinion of himself, that Sailer requested him to call upon his friend Wittmann, in Ratisbon, and act as the bearer of a letter to him. But as Hofbauer was under the impression that in this letter Wittmann had been instructed how to act toward him, he did not deliver the letter in person. That the Saint made a mistake in his judgment of Sailer, and that he did an injustice to the saintly Wittmann by avoiding him for no other reason than a groundless suspicion, no one will nowadays deny. It is a question whether Hofbauer, in the position in which his intimacy with Sailer's opponents placed him, and surrounded as he was with so many and such contradictory estimates of Sailer, could have formed of the case an opinion that was at once unbiassed and objectively just. What distinctly characterized the Saint in this entire episode, was his fear of becoming entangled in a dangerous movement, or of presenting even the semblance of being in any way connected with these groups. As a rule, fear and timidity were no part of his character. Only when there was danger of even remotely exposing the purity of the Faith to danger, did he feel that he could not be sufficiently on his guard or positive enough. To this man, who could glory that he had never in the whole course of his life been tempted against Faith, and who declared that he should have to do violence to himself to be an unbeliever, no caution could be too great in a case of this kind. Referring in later years to this episode, he wrote: "With the help of God

[7] Ringseis, *Memoirs*, II. p. 24.

I have always succeeded in shunning every danger of this sort, for I have schooled myself ever to exercise the utmost care in preserving intact and unsullied the divine grace of the one true faith."

At Wisent, a little village near Ratisbon, the Vicar-General and Kopsch waited two weeks for the arrival of their companions. They then proceeded on their journey, going by water down the Danube. We can form no idea, nowadays, of the time consumed by traveling in those days, nor of the many difficulties which the traveler had to face. It required six full days to go from Ratisbon to Vienna. This will not be surprising when one is reminded that the voyage was made in large row-boats furnished with cabins. But the days thus spent in travel, were not a loss or waste of time. Our travelers gave many hours to prayer, and when not otherwise engaged they observed closely the ways of men and the political status of the countries through which they passed. In a letter to Father General, Hofbauer tells us that on these journeys he was wont to study especially the moral and religious temper of the people; and he adds, somewhat self-consciously, that he is well-acquainted with the particular needs and conditions of each nationality. Undoubtedly, too, much good that he accomplished for individual souls as he made his way along the country-roads or rode in the stage-coaches during those months of travel, is unknown for the simple reason that it has never been recorded on paper. Such men as Hofbauer are not wont to write diaries. In the dispensation of a wise Providence, each of the Saints is endowed with graces which fit him for his especial work in the world, and which therefore, may be called his peculiar gifts. Hofbauer possessed a kindly, affable manner, which made him ever ready to converse with strangers, and he had the gift of accomplishing almost wonderful results with a few simple words. Many a time his mere appearance stirred the depths of certain susceptible souls to such a degree that it had the effect of a spiritual renovation.

At Ingolstadt, through which Hofbauer passed on this journey, his fervor and profound reverence at the altar so impressed the sacristan of the church, that the latter kept exclaiming, "A holy man, a holy priest!" And yet, the travel-

ing religious was an utter stranger to this man. The purificator which Hofbauer used during this Mass was preserved as a precious relic by the good sacristan.[8]

Another incident that is told of the Saint probably belongs to this period of his life. On a certain occasion, when Hofbauer was riding in a stage-coach, there sat opposite to him a youth who was a spiritual and physical wreck, but who persisted in heaping the coarsest insults upon him. At noon the stage halted at an inn, and all alighted. No one was concerned about the contemptible youth, who, on account of weakness, could not leave the stage. The moment for Hofbauer's revenge had come. He took the young man into his arms, carried him into the inn, ordered a meal for him, and after the repast bore him back into the stage-coach. During the rest of the journey, the young man's language was quite the reverse of that in which he had previously indulged. His attitude toward the Saint had changed completely. Sorrow-stricken, he declared that had he met such a priest earlier in life, he should never have sunk to his present degradation.

These episodes will suffice to show that these journeys, far from being a waste of time, were in reality missionary tours without the usual obligation of preaching.

Our travelers left the boat at Krems. Their destination was Vienna; but in those days strangers coming to the Capital from "The Empire" were not permitted to enter Vienna without special authorization, to obtain which they were frequently obliged to wait for days. This pass-nuisance was one of the consequences of the Prussian withdrawal from the Coalition against France. Since then the Viennese had nursed a very bitter feeling against "the empire beyond the border." Our wanderers, therefore, were compelled to proceed on their way without entering the city. After a brief visit with the relatives of Father Egkher, in Zellerdorf, they resumed their journey northward with all possible speed. They covered the distance from Bruenn to Olmuetz on foot; thence they went by stage to Teschen and, their money giving out at this juncture, from Teschen to Cracow once more on foot.

[8] This is a tradition. The purificator is now in the possession of the Redemptorist Fathers at Cham, in Bavaria.

At Cracow there occurred an event as unexpected as it was annoying and humiliating to the Vicar-General. After all the untoward events of his journeyings, it was to be fully three months before he should again see his brethren in Warsaw. He had hardly set foot in Cracow, when he was arrested by the police. This was on April 21. Advance notices from Bruenn had announced that two of the four clergymen on their way to Cracow were wanted as abductors since the year 1795. Investigation proved that only Hofbauer was guilty of the charge. Accordingly, his three companions were permitted to continue their journey, whilst he was placed in custody in the Dominican convent. Kopsch, however, of his own accord, remained with the Saint. Legal proceedings, with all their tedious formality, were now instituted against him by the civil authorities all along the line from Znaim to Cracow. It was not until the middle of June that a verdict in the case was rendered. Hofbauer was not to be allowed to resume his journey until the four boys he had taken from the country had been brought back to their homes. There was no course open to the Saint but to submit. Again a few weeks passed until July 10, when Father Jestersheim arrived at Cracow with the four pupils. Jestersheim was required personally to accompany each one to his respective home in the Znaim district. In the meantime, the police remembered that, in 1795, Hofbauer had also taken two assistant teachers with him to Poland, and that, in 1796, a second nephew of his, Francis, the son of Lawrence Hofbauer, had gone abroad without legal permission and had entered the novitiate at St. Benno's. Naturally, the Vicar-General was likewise held responsible for this second breach of the law. The two assistant teachers, however, had left the Congregation, and Francis Hofbauer, now a clerical student at St. Benno's, had been taken thither by his own father. But the police looked upon these rejoinders as empty subterfuges, and insisted on the return of the three persons before handing Hofbauer his discharge. This decision was communicated to him on the morning of August 5. Father Jestersheim had returned from Znaim several days previously, and was impatient to go back to Warsaw. Hofbauer's patience, too, was at an end. A police report states what fol-

lowed: "On this occasion Hofbauer dared to cast aspersion on the Imperial Government of Austria, and made use of very insulting language. This was overlooked for the moment, and he was censured only for his outburst of temper. He was permitted to go to dinner, with the distinct understanding, however, that he was to appear on the morrow for detailed examination." But matters did not proceed according to schedule. That same afternoon, as the report goes on to say, Hofbauer succeeded in escaping with Father Jestersheim across the border into Prussian territory not far distant.

August was half over when he arrived at St. Benno's. This journey, so crowded with adventure, suffering, and disappointment, had lasted nearly a year. Even now he intended to make but a brief stay in Warsaw — just long enough to settle several important matters, and to select the Fathers for the prospective foundation in Jestetten or Partenkirchen. After that, as he expressly declared at one of the hearings in Cracow, he intended to take up his permanent residence in Germany. But once again his patience was subjected to a severe test: four long years, 1798–1802, were to elapse before circumstances allowed him to return to Germany.

CHAPTER IV

FROM THE YEAR 1798 TO THE YEAR 1802

AT Warsaw the Vicar-General found awaiting him a communication from Beroldingen, with whom he had kept up a correspondence during his journeys. It was not very encouraging. Circumstances had arisen that threatened the prospects of any foundation at Jestetten. Beroldingen was furthermore of the opinion that the time was not ripe for a foundation in Germany. The Saint, in his last letter, had informed Beroldingen, that through the good offices of a friend, a priest in Augsburg, nine students from Suabia had determined to enter the Congregation. That nine young men should pledge themselves to an Order which could hold out to them no actual prospects, Beroldingen regarded as nothing less than a phenomenon in those days. A novitiate in Germany, however, was altogether unthinkable at this time, when nothing was more ardently desired, nothing more constantly attempted, than the destruction of the entire Catholic clergy. "We ourselves," he writes, "are at present on the point of losing our benefices, and of being reduced to the merest pittance of a pension." At best, a novitiate could be maintained only under the title of a Missionary Institute for the Orient or for the North; Austria would be best suited for the purpose; even then, the whole matter of establishing such a house would have to be managed very quietly and very tactfully. He proposed to let the nine candidates spend the winter in Austria. He had a piece of property, he wrote, in the vicinity of Vienna. There, he himself would initiate them into the conventual life; after six months he should be able to tell him whether they were fit for apostolic labors or not. As to securing the necessary permission, he himself would speak with the Emperor.

The noble Canon's intentions were good; but we may well assume that neither Hofbauer nor the nine candidates would subscribe to these suggestions. What became of those nine

students is not known. To call them to St. Benno's was evidently impracticable, since the freedom which the Fathers there had formerly enjoyed, came to an end when the Prussian administration went into power, and the difficulties set in the way of admitting novices became daily more provoking. In the eyes of the Government, the Fathers at St. Benno's had no other title to legal existence than the direction of the school for the poor, and for this purpose, the number of subjects there was quite sufficient. Moreover, the Prussian ecclesiastical policy was no less hostile to the convents than that of Austria. One thing was being borne in upon the Vicar-General with ever-increasing force, and that was that there were no flattering prospects for the further development of his Congregation in Southern Prussia. Hence his eagerness to get away from Warsaw, at least with the novitiate.

In the spring of 1799, Southeast Germany again became the theater of war — the Second War of the Coalition. In March the French were defeated at Ostrach, and later at Stockach, by the Archduke Charles, and forced to retire across the Rhine. During the following summer our Saint was once more in communication with Beroldingen, concerning a new foundation in Suabia. He declared that he could no longer tolerate the constant restraint placed upon him: he must be free to act when and as the future welfare of the Congregation demanded. Beroldingen, in his reply of September 7, agreed that Suabia was well-suited for a novitiate, as there were still upwards of a hundred independent rulers in Suabia who, in their endeavor to preserve their autonomy, granted a toleration that would prove as beneficial to the Church as it had proved to its enemies. The Suabians, moreover, were easy to manage, and, as a rule, were more moral than the people in any other part of Germany. But Beroldingen considered the site selected by the Saint as ill-suited, and proposed another in its stead. At first he suggested his brother's castle, situated near Suabia-Gmuend, which had a beautiful little chapel attached. Schoenenberg, a popular place of pilgrimage near Ellwangen, lay close at hand, and would probably be offered to the Redemptorists, since it was sorely in need of priests. Here the Fathers would find ample opportunity for the exercise of their apostolic zeal, while

the novices were filling out the year of probation at the castle. The castle was unoccupied, for his sister-in-law refused to reside there since it had been struck by lightning.

These prospects seemed bright indeed, but like so many others that had gone before, they were doomed to failure. After conferring with his brother, Beroldingen, in a letter written to St. Benno's on October 24, 1799, was forced to admit that his predictions of a Suabian foundation had been premature. Suabia had experienced most of the terrible effects that follow in the wake of war. The cattle had been attacked by epidemic diseases, and the result was that the price of foodstuffs had soared beyond the reach of the common people. The Suabians, for the most part, had been reduced to beggary, and the future promised no relief. In Switzerland, according to his own testimony, the misery of the people was simply beyond the power of words to describe. Even bread had become a luxury among them, and it was hard to tell how most of them could outlive the ravages of the winter months. As recently as September 30, Constance had seen the French, Russians, and Austrians engaged in terrific battles. But the good Canon was not to be beaten. He now turned his attention to the diocese of Hildesheim, in which he held a benefice. Knowing very well that every worthy cause found in Hofbauer a staunch promoter, he painted a very grim picture of the ecclesiastical and religious conditions in this diocese. Nowhere, he declared, was the upbuilding of priestly ideals so much needed among the clergy as there. Besides, he was well aware, he says, that Hofbauer much preferred a foundation in Bavaria or in the Tyrol to one in Saxony, for there was in either of these countries a more virile Catholicity, and consequently the prospects of securing many new members were brighter there than in Saxony.[1]

All these plans remained only on paper. Every attempt to bring them to the wished-for consummation, met with virtual refusal. The Elector of Saxony did indeed promise to help the Saint's Congregation in every way, but this did not mean that he would admit it into his territory. Even had he been

[1] In the letters he wrote at this time, Hofbauer refers also to a foundation in or near Schwaz in the Tyrol.

willing to do so, he should have found himself hampered in every move by the restrictions which there, as elsewhere, had been placed upon religion.

In Freising there were difficulties of another sort. The negotiations with the Bishop and the Diocesan Chapter reveal some of the obstacles which Hofbauer had to contend with, in trying to bring the Congregation to the fore. Even in ecclesiastical circles, the Institute founded by Alphonsus de Liguori seems to have been practically unknown. The Chapter refers in terms little less than contemptuous to the letter of "a certain Hofbauer, Vicar-General of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer, a society whose existence is as little known to us as is its lawful establishment." The Bishop himself, though a friend of Beroldingen's and in no way opposed to Hofbauer, doubted whether this new Congregation would become sufficiently known in a short time to attract general attention. The introduction of the Redemptorists would, furthermore, be a reflection on the Fathers of the Faith of Jesus, who, after all, were better known.

Beroldingen tried to answer these objections, but without success. The Bishop was favorably inclined, and would have gladly complied with his wishes, if only for friendship's sake. But his Consistory was unyielding and insisted that not only Bavaria, but all Germany, was already overcrowded with convents, and there was no need of founding new ones. With that the case was closed. Beroldingen, somewhat vexed, wrote to Hofbauer that there was not in all Germany a single Consistory that did not belong to that hateful circle which was bent primarily upon the destruction of the hierarchy. "Too well do I know," he declares, "that there is scarcely a young priest that is not tainted with the philosophy of Kant. . . . The Bishops are good, eager to oblige, and have the best intentions, but the smallest trifle appears to them an insurmountable difficulty. . . . Still, let us not lose courage."

Beroldingen was not Hofbauer's only supporter during these trying years. Another who took an active interest in Hofbauer's plans, was Monsignor Lorenzo Litta. This able and cultured Milanese had succeeded Albertrandi in the Nunciature of Warsaw, and when a little later that nunciature was

discontinued, had been appointed Legate at St. Petersburg. On his return from Russia, in 1799, he spent a month at Warsaw. During that time, the zealous Prince of the Church was able to observe at close range the labors of the Fathers at St. Benno's, and saw with much satisfaction the fruitful results with which those labors were blessed. From Warsaw he traveled *viâ* Vienna to Venice, where he remained during the Conclave. In 1801, he was created a Cardinal at Rome. During these years he had corresponded at regular intervals with Hofbauer, to whom he sent from Venice the first news of the election of Pope Pius VII. Litta wished Hofbauer to establish a house in Italy. He had already conferred with Cardinal Archbishop Ferrara about the matter. Nothing was closer to the Saint's heart. For years this had been his most ardent desire, and to this end he had put forth his best efforts; but the project was less practicable now than it had been heretofore, by reason of the recent political upheavals in Italy. Even Litta admitted this shortly afterward.

Like the Divine Master Himself, the Houses of the Congregation in the States of the Church and in Naples had come upon evil days, and the tempest had overwhelmed them — such a tempest as had never before descended upon them. A letter from Father General, dated April 7, 1797, was the last that reached St. Benno's for a long time. In 1798, the victorious French entered the Papal States and led Pope Pius captive to Valence, where he succumbed to his sufferings in the following year. Many convents were confiscated and the religious dispersed. The Redemptorists lost their five convents in the Papal States, and the members were dispersed to await the dawn of brighter days. The common people were panic-stricken. Dread of the invader had paralyzed all sober thinking: nothing was thought of, nothing spoken of, but the oncoming French battalions. Father Blasucci, unable longer to endure this exhibition of terror, one day finally broke out in disgust: "Let the French come! Perhaps there will then be an end to all these alarming reports." This casual remark was carried to the King, and Blasucci was deprived of his office as a rebel and secret supporter of the French, and as such was imprisoned in a distant Camaldolese convent. With

the words *Gloria Patri!* on his lips, the aged Superior General — he was then seventy years old — heard his sentence, and bowed in humble submission. The officer who had to accompany him declared on his return home: "I have just led a saint into captivity." From April, 1798 — the time at which Hofbauer was incarcerated at Cracow — until November, 1799, Blasucci lived in a little cell of the Camaldolese convent, spending his time in prayer and contemplation. Meanwhile, the storm of the Revolution swept over the Kingdom. The streets of Naples were frequently the scenes of bloody encounters. The "Parthenopaic Republic" was set up, but lasted only as long as the French were masters of the city. By changing their plan of attack to a species of guerrilla warfare, the Italians met with more success. The unexpected sallies of small bands of Neapolitans at last drove the intruders across the border, and in January, 1800, King Ferdinand made his entry into Naples. A few months later the new Pope, Pius VII, returned to Rome in triumph. By the King's command, Father Blasucci was recalled and restored to his office. The dispossessed religious hastened back from exile, and the confiscated convents reverted to their rightful owners. The Redemptorists were reinstated in all their houses except San Giuliano, which had already been sold by the French.

One need not be told that at Warsaw, the Fathers entertained great fears for the Congregation during these turbulent months. All communication with the mother-house had been cut off, and as week after week passed without any news from Rome, the Community at St. Benno's became more and more alarmed. There was no reassurance until the midyear of 1800, when at last a letter from Father Blasucci arrived, scattering the clouds of gloom and filling the hearts of all with joy and gratitude. "God be praised," wrote the Saint in reply, "for having deigned to preserve our Congregation during this terrible storm. Your Paternity's letter has dispelled all our gloomy thoughts. All the brethren here sincerely love the Congregation; for just as I myself love nothing in this world more than the Congregation, so do I endeavor to instill that same love into the hearts of my confrères. Indeed, I can bear

witness that, with the possible exception of one, all here at St. Benno's are ready to lay down their life rather than see the least harm come to the Congregation."

So far as the Vicar-General's plans were concerned, therefore, the West and the South were forbidden territory. Negotiations in the interest of new foundations had suddenly come to a standstill. Not only had every attempt to establish a flourishing novitiate been frustrated, but the situation at Warsaw itself became so acute, that it was next to impossible to educate and train the recruits even at St. Benno's.

One of the most painful encroachments of the Government upon Catholic convent-life at this time was, as is well known, the fixing of the age-limit for the reception of novices. In Prussia no one was to be admitted before his twenty-fourth year; and as Poland since the year 1796 was under Prussian domination, this ordinance applied also to the convents in Warsaw. During the first years of the Prussian occupation, however, St. Benno's seems to have suffered very little if at all. But eventually steps were taken to enforce the ordinance as rigidly there as elsewhere. The educational system in vogue in the other schools of Prussia was now to be introduced into those of the Province recently acquired. As a prelude to this reform, orders were issued for a thorough examination into, and a minute report on, the present status of all the schools of Southern Prussia. St. Benno's was the last of the schools to be visited by the department at Warsaw. This was in the year 1799. Everything in the convent and the church, together with the entire school-system at St. Benno's, passed under the keen eyes of the Commissary of the Government. His findings were set down with conscientious exactness in a lengthy Report which he sent to King Frederick William III on October 27, 1799. The Order of the Redemptorists, the School and the Institutes at St. Benno's, the Income, and the Necessary Reforms, were treated in so many Chapters in this Report. Though this Report was almost merciless in its accuracy and its attention to details, still it cannot be said that it breathed any undue hatred or animosity, or was directly aimed at the suppression of the Bennonites. The Commissary, however, displayed a woful ignorance of Catholic convent-life. To him

St. Benno's was nothing but an ordinary school, and the novitiate was a training-school for school-teachers. "The Order interests the State only in so far as it trains teachers for the citizens of the State." This was the standard of excellence by which everything at St. Benno's was to be adjudged. Quite naturally, therefore, he severely condemned the entire mode of living followed by the novices and the clerics, the occupations in which they engaged, and all the spiritual activities of the Fathers. "The novice," he writes, "is obliged to submit to every sort of humiliation, and he is constantly subjected to such treatment as is calculated to destroy his self-respect and every semblance of self-reliance."

From this Report of the Commissary we learn also the exact order of the day for the clerics:

A.M.

4.30	Rising.
5.00– 6.00	Prayer and Meditation.
6.00– 7.30	Lectures on Dogmatic and Moral Theology and Hermeneutics.
7.30– 8.00	For those in charge of classes, preparation of the day's lessons.
8.00–10.00	For the younger clerics, repetition of matter previously studied, and preparation of new lessons.
10.00–10.45	Devotions in church.
10.45–12.00	Public discussion of previous lessons in the presence of the Prefect.
12.00	Dinner and Recreation.

P.M.

2.00	*Collegium Philosophicum.*
3.00– 4.00	Spiritual Reading and Meditation.
4.00– 5.00	Study of previous Philosophical Lectures.
5.00– 5.30	Devotions in church.
5.30	Manual labor for half an hour, usually in the garden.

6.00	Supper.
7.00– 8.00	Recreation.
8.00– 9.00	Repetition of lessons in the presence of the Prefect.
9.00– 9.45	Recreation, followed by bedtime.

The Commissary comments on this system as follows: "This is the order followed in training the Bennonites to become teachers. It would be hard indeed to find anywhere a more unnatural method, or one better calculated to paralyze the mental powers and to produce a spirit of fanaticism dangerous to morality itself. The greater portion of the day is spent in prayer and meditation, that is to say, in inducing a state of contemplation, by means of which the student is to abstract from himself entirely and to raise himself above the material world to a consideration of, and immediate communion with, the world of spirits." The natural result of all this, according to the Commissary, is, that some must become fanatics, and others hypocrites. Theology and Philosophy, in his opinion, are nothing but a jumble of sophistry and meaningless terms "which confuse the mind of the pupil and stifle all healthy thinking."

Even the Boys' School, which comprised three classes, fails to win the unqualified praise of the Commissary. The pupils, it is true, are commended for their knowledge of the German and the Polish languages; but he severely condemns the practice of taking the children to church three times a day, where, it is alleged, they are obliged to kneel for hours.

Not so severe is his judgment of the St. Casimir's Girls' School, which at the time numbered one hundred and thirty pupils. "The purpose of this school," as stated in the Report, "is indeed most praiseworthy, for it is precisely the girls of the poorer classes that need a suitable State training and education, by means of which the inclination to work is acquired, and their capacity for work properly developed." But here, too, he finds fault: "The children are trained beyond the needs of their future callings, their education is prolonged to an age when it should long since have been completed; they remain at the Institute until their eighteenth or even their twentieth

year: this is entirely too long; they should be dismissed at the age of fourteen."

When he came to treat of reforms needed at St. Benno's, the Commissary condescended to take Hofbauer into his counsel. The Vicar-General, asked to state his opinions, made the following demands:

1. Permission to admit candidates for the Order before the age of twenty-four. Hofbauer considered this essential to the future welfare of the Congregation. It was evident that the religious life was becoming ever less attractive to the young. To develop vocations properly, youth must be taken in hand early, and surrounded with all the safeguards and uplifting influences of convent life before the world with its evil maxims and principles had definitely shaped the character of the aspirant. These arguments, however, were waved aside by the Commissary as merely another proof of the proselytism practised by all the monks.

2. Compulsory education, at least in the sense that the children living within a specified portion of the city be obliged to attend the school at St. Benno's.

3. Books and stationery to be supplied without cost to poor children, and a special sum set aside from the Poor Fund to cover the expense which this would entail.

4. The establishment of a Premium Fund, upon which the Fathers could draw for rewards for the more diligent and more deserving pupils.

All these demands, with the exception of the second, were summarily rejected. The practice of conferring premiums as a reward of merit was particularly condemned as being morally bad, and calculated to create jealousy, envy, and other unworthy sentiments among the pupils.

The Commissary's suggestions were cast along wholly different lines: The education of the Bennonite, according to his view, was fundamentally wrong, for the reason that it trained him to become primarily a monk rather than a teacher. Hereafter, the process must be reversed in the sense that the needs of the future teacher alone be taken into account: in this case, the education of the Bennonite student need not occupy more than three years. For this "novitiate" of three years, as the

Commissary chose to call it, a definite plan of teaching is to be drawn up. No one is to be admitted into the novitiate before the age of twenty-four, the religious habit may be taken only at the end of the novitiate, and the Bennonite may not be admitted either to the vows or to Holy Orders until he has successfully passed the civil examination and been declared fit to take up the duties of a teacher. He shall then spend at least four hours daily in the actual work of teaching, and while engaged as a teacher shall not be called upon to exercise any ecclesiastical functions. For these functions other members shall be appointed.

The labors of the Fathers for the spiritual welfare of souls were admitted to be a necessity so long as the native clergy continued to be remiss in the exercise of priestly zeal. "The priests here in Warsaw," the Commissary states in his Report, "and especially the Pastor of Panna Maria, to which district St. Benno's belongs, trouble themselves very little about the souls committed to their charge. The latter and his Vicar led such scandalous lives that the authorities had to call upon the Ordinary to take action against them." The Nuncio Albertrandi himself had reported the Vicar for his seditious remarks against the Government.

At least one of the suggestions made by the Commissary was of a constructive nature. He recognized the need of more room at St. Benno's, if the work of the Fathers was to be carried on properly, and recommended giving them a more commodious building. He proposed several convents in or near Warsaw as being suited to this purpose, particularly the Carmelite convent in the suburbs of Cracow, since the number of Religious there was so reduced that the community was practically extinct.

Some of the reforms proposed by the Commissary, too, contained an element of sense and reason. No serious objection could be offered, when he insisted, for instance, that the Fathers engaged in teaching be separated from those having the care of souls; that the training of the former be conducted along strictly professional and pedagogical lines; that the teaching of Latin be discontinued so that more attention might be given to the elementary branches and to German and Polish;

and that the pupils be required to attend school also on holidays. But however desirable these changes may have been, it was impossible to effect them so long as the necessary funds were withheld and the Saint's every attempt to increase the personnel of his community was frustrated by the civil authorities. The unrelenting attitude of the government in respect to the age at which new members might be admitted, made the growth of the Congregation in these parts a forlorn hope. This was a severe blow for Hofbauer: it meant, in effect, that all his great plans for the future were destined to come to naught.

The time for action had come. Encouraged by his friend Viezi, with whom we have already become acquainted, he determined to stake his all on a venture, by carrying the matter over the head of the Commissary and appealing directly to the Government for a dispensation from this law. After the Abbé Viezi had presented a Memorial on the conditions at St. Benno's, Hofbauer himself wrote to the President of the Government on September 12, 1799. In vigorous language he set forth the necessity of an early and thorough training of the young religious destined to labor in a city where conditions were peculiar and the problems to be solved unusually difficult. Formerly, he declared, when he was wont to admit young men to the novitiate at the age of seventeen, scarcely one out of ten candidates was found to be fit for this work; what hope of securing worth-while results will be left to him, then, if he were permitted to receive candidates only after the completion of their twenty-fourth year! "At this age," he argues, "the hearts of most young men have already been spoiled by contact with the world, their character is so tainted, and their habits so at variance with Christian morality, that it would be perilous to admit them into any religious community or to entrust them with the upbringing of the young.". . . "Our Institute," he continues, "has need of only such subjects as are filled with true, active, unswerving love for their fellow-men — a rare virtue indeed in these our days, a virtue which is everywhere lauded with the lips but nowadays seldom has a place in the heart. The all-important lesson, 'Do to your neighbor all the good that you possibly can, without looking for any remunera-

tion,' is one that cannot be learned overnight: from earliest youth it must be deeply and indelibly impressed on the minds and hearts of those especially who are called to labor for the welfare of their fellow-men either as teachers in the schools or as pastors in the ministry. To one whose character has been definitely formed and whose heart has been contracted by selfish motives, it is useless to speak of a charity that is all-embracing, useless to remind him that in toiling for his neighbor's welfare he is doing the work of the Divine Redeemer Himself: your words may fall upon willing ears, but they will never take root in the heart of such a one, — they are but as the good seed scattered to the four winds of heaven, because such a one will never have the courage and constancy to make the many sacrifices which such a life entails. . . . The life of the teacher, it is true, is not an easy life, but a life of drudgery and of infinite patience: a single explanation will not suffice to give the pupil a thorough knowledge of any given subject; the teacher must go over the same ground again and again. For this work, as every thinking man will readily see and admit, only those are fit that are constant in well-doing, loyal to their ideals, and resolute in living up to those ideals; those, in a word, who will not grow disheartened, when their labors are attended with difficulties and rewarded for the most part with indifference and ingratitute. It is only when one has schooled one's self to labor the more as the obstacles encountered are multiplied, only when one has put off all manner of self-seeking, that one can hope to succeed in this work of education and lead others out of the darkness of ignorance into the light of truth and knowledge. Such a teacher will find that he can lead his pupils whithersoever he wills. If there is revolt against the existing order of things, if the world is rent from time to time with political and social upheavals, the blame is to be placed, not on the people, but on the State for not stemming the tide of insubordination at its very source. To resort to the rigor of police intervention except as an extreme means of quelling open revolt or of combating a moral evil that has assumed general proportions and has attacked the entire social body, is to bring all just authority into contempt, to weaken the right arm of the law, and to lower the dignity of

the State to the dust. But let the State set its hand seriously and energetically to the task of improving the masses, let the State lend its aid and authority to those who are laboring for the uplift of their fellow-men, and there will be no need of having recourse to these rigorous preventive measures to safeguard the government or to save the people from themselves. If, on the contrary, the people look in vain for evidence that the State is honestly endeavoring to improve their condition, it will be useless to try to impress upon them and upon the young in particular, that all authority comes from God, that one must obey for conscience' sake, and that God will one day visit a judgment of condemnation upon those in authority, if they have not 'led the people into the path of His commandments and taught them to run in the way of His law.' Perhaps Providence has selected Your Excellency to come to the aid of suffering humanity by exercising your authority along these very lines. As for me, I can assure you, that this my appeal is marred by no thought of self. I could lead a far more peaceful life as a private citizen, and with my scant means could live far more comfortably than has hitherto been possible to me, if I had to provide for myself alone. But I am interested, not only in myself, but in a number of others as well, whose welfare I am not able to promote alone. If Your Excellency will use your influence in our behalf, you will be crowned with the deathless glory which every true benefactor of mankind possesses in the eyes of God and of men. I am writing as my heart suggests, and I beseech Almighty God to make use of Your Excellency to stem the torrent of evil that is sweeping over the land. . . ."

The Saint goes on to say that the Institute for which he is pleading, is dependent wholly upon its own resources. "No interest in its well-being is shown by any one who could be of real service to it; on the contrary, to many its very existence is as a thorn in their side; even the clergy here, with few exceptions, would not hesitate to destroy it, if they could, for the confidence which the people place in us is regarded by them as a stinging rebuke.". . . "Is it not an inconceivable folly," he asks, in conclusion, "to complain of the decay of what is good, and at the same time to hate those who make it their

business, and are bound by virtue of their vocation, to labor for the restoration of what is good?"

The King, it seems, was at first inclined to lend a willing ear to this eloquent appeal. But the Government of Warsaw, in submitting its opinion on the communications received from Hofbauer and Viezi, refused to swerve from its course. It referred once more to the Report of October 27, and declared that only by complying with the conditions therein set forth could the Institute at St. Benno's accomplish what its supporters claimed for it. Hofbauer's appeal was set down as only another proof of the spirit of his Congregation as described in that Report: "Everywhere one hears him spoken of as an ardent promoter of his Order." Hofbauer was accordingly ordered to remain quiet and possess his soul in patience until such time as the administration saw fit to pass upon the proposals contained in the aforementioned Report.

The King's final reply to Hofbauer, dated November 17, 1800, was in no wise at variance with the provisions of that Report. All the proposals and petitions offered by Hofbauer, with the sole exception of his request for a Fund for the Education of Poor Children, were rejected as impracticable; on the other hand, nearly all the "reforms" demanded by the Commissary were approved. His suggestion that the Fathers thereafter be forbidden to take the children to the church on week-days, was one of the few that did not meet with the full support of the Government; and even this was not absolutely condemned, but merely declared to be inopportune, inasmuch as such restrictions should be made only by degrees.

The plan for the re-organization of the activities at St. Benno's drawn up by the administration on January 4, 1801, proved a very unwelcome New Year's gift. To his consternation the Saint discovered that not only the School, but the training of the young religious as well was to be regulated according to specifications contained in that document. The Vicar-General once more ventured to remonstrate, but he was warned that, if he did not submit, all subsidies hitherto enjoyed by the Institute would be withdrawn.

The regulations referring to the Novitiate could be evaded by such candidates as were able to pass the Teachers' examina-

tion either before or after the year of the noviceship. The greatest difficulty was the age-limit set by the authorities. In effect it meant nothing less than a Congregation without an assured future. The fact is, that this seems to have been the avowed purpose of the State in applying this legislation to the convents of that time — to destroy them by preventing the Orders from receiving new recruits to fill up the vacancies which death had made in their ranks. In the present case, the effects of this ruling were felt all the more, since not profession, but the mere entrance into the novitiate, was prohibited until the aspirant had reached an age when, as a rule, the question of vocation has long since been settled. As a consequence, the autumn of 1801 found only two novices at St. Benno's. Other convents fared even worse: at this time there were no novices at all in any of them except that of the Vincentians.

On October 1, 1801, the Saint poured out his grief in a letter to Father Tannoja: "Most earnestly do I beg you and the Fathers in Italy to recommend our Congregation here to the mercy of God, for we are in great distress, and not only we, but all religious. The reins of government are in the hands of professed Freethinkers, who have begun to harass the Catholic clergy in every possible way. Catholic worship is not expressly forbidden, it is true, but the guns of the enemy are so constantly and so surely trained upon all the supports of religion, that it must gradually become impossible even to hold the divine services." Free communication of religious priests with their Superiors abroad, he goes on to explain, is interdicted, and even the Bishops are forbidden to communicate with the Pope. "We are living in evil days here. The Church of God is vilified, oppressed, and persecuted, while we look on helpless to defend or rescue the Bride of Christ from the hatred of her foes. Oh, how fortunate you are, my dear Brethren, in having a Catholic King who lends his protection to the clergy. But to whom shall we have recourse? The hand of the oppressor is heavy upon us. The Government has established here a "Spiritual Council," which is spiritual in name only: in every other respect it is a travesty, a makeshift, and a pretense of what it claims to be, as among all the Councilors there is not a single Catholic. The President

of this Council is neither a Lutheran, nor a Calvinist, nor a Zwinglian; he is not even a Christian, but a man of depraved character and the sworn enemy of convents and the religious life. And this man sits in judgment upon religion, hands down decisions on ecclesiastical questions, and gives orders to the Bishops and the entire clergy! We have seen the glory of the royal priesthood brought down even to the dust. This city is full of Freethinkers, and it is to be looked upon as a constant miracle of God, that the people, for the most part, still following in the footsteps of their Catholic forefathers, persevere in well-doing, hunger and thirst after justice, and evince an ever-increasing desire to hear the word of God, the more we priests, unworthy as we are, endeavor to satisfy that desire by our preaching. I write all this, so that you may all be impelled the more fervently to pray to God for us, the more clearly you understand the circumstances in which we are placed."

We have no means of ascertaining to what extent the proposed reforms were enforced at St. Benno's. There was another inspection of the School in the summer of 1802, conducted by the celebrated schoolman and pedagogue Frederick Gedike, in the capacity of Royal Commissioner. After visiting the two schools, St. Benno's and St. Casimir's, on July 1, he drew up a Report for the King, in which he waxes eloquent in commenting on the miserable, makeshift conditions prevailing at both Schools for the Poor. He finds that all the class-rooms are taxed beyond their capacity, and stresses the need of more spacious quarters for the work in hand. From this Report we learn that in the Boys' School at this time there were sixty pupils in the first class, sixty-eight in the second, and one hundred and forty in the third, "who are huddled together in the extremely small class-rooms of the two wretched frame buildings." Similar conditions existed in the three classes of the Girls' School!

Hofbauer complained to Gedike of the irregular attendance of many of the children. Some of the pupils quitted school altogether, others remained away for so long a time, that on their return it was found necessary to make them begin their schooling all over again. This had occurred three or four times in the case of the same children, with the result that they

never made any progress. Under these circumstances one can readily understand why Hofbauer had suggested that the attendance of the pupils at school be made compulsory. Gedike addressed the children on this point, telling them that the King desired nothing more than their regular attendance at school.

The next day the three novices had to appear before the Commissioner. They were brought into the refectory, and in his presence were examined in Pedagogy by Father Huebl, and in Philosophy by Father Vannelet. Gedike was displeased alike with the professors and with the students. Huebl, he claimed, "did not know how to turn an imperfect answer to the advantage of the student, or to make the student think." He found fault with the philosophical course, because the students were required to learn everything by heart without sense or understanding. He called for an examination of the students in Theology. Hofbauer objected, but after some argument was at length obliged to submit. Gedike praised Father Passerat's fluency in Latin, and commended the clerical students for their knowledge of Moral and Dogmatic Theology, in whose prompt answers and ready solutions, he graciously admitted, he had found nothing objectionable or unreasonable.

Before leaving St. Benno's, the Commissioner insisted on listening to a Polish sermon in the church, which he had translated to him as the preacher went on with his discourse. His comment upon what he had heard is perhaps typical of the bias which had taken hold of even the better minds of that day. "The sermon," he writes, "was nothing else than a series of platitudes on the veneration of Mary, such as one usually hears from Catholic pulpits." The Commissioner sums up his opinion of the Redemptorist Fathers in Warsaw with the general remark: "The Bennonites are reputed to hold very fanatical principles, and the divine services in their church never cease, but go on without interruption from early morning till late at night, with the result that there are many abuses and much disorder."

The Saint, it is true, repeatedly received proofs that the civil authorities had never seriously intended to suppress St. Benno's. Thus, the Government's decision to give over to the Bennonites the spacious convent of the Carmelites, even though

this decision was never actually carried out, could hardly be interpreted as an attempt to destroy the work of the Fathers in Warsaw. The Protestant Government, moreover, again and again shielded the inmates of St. Benno's against the accusations of the Freethinkers and the complaints of the clergy. In 1801, the church was ordered closed at an earlier hour, but in the following year the Government closed an eye to this ruling, and permitted the services to be conducted exactly as in former times. In a letter dated August 14, 1802, the Vicar-General, consequently, writes in a more cheerful strain of conditions at Warsaw: "Our Institute is in no danger of being suppressed, as a number of other institutes have been suppressed during the course of the past year. Certain individual members of the present administration are indeed very hostile to us, but their hostility is merely a private, personal matter. Whenever the Government calls for legal advice or official testimony on the value of our work, even our foes are forced, unwillingly perhaps, to acknowledge the usefulness and the unimpeachable character of our Institute. All this I ascribe to the special mercy of God."

This, however, did not alter the fact that the Transalpine Congregation was now doomed to a slow but certain death, unless its future could be secured in a Catholic country where the Church was free to live and act, untrammelled and unmenaced by the State.

This fact will help to account in a measure for Hofbauer's cautious attitude at this time, whenever there was question of accepting new foundations either in Southern Prussia or in the adjacent territory of Russia. Thus, when Father Rudolph wrote from Mitau, in 1797, that in Courland the brethren were personally in want of nothing, but that there were two or three posts which could be taken over at once, if they had the services of several more Fathers, the Saint was at once on his guard. In 1799, Canon Goldberger wrote to remind the Saint of his promise to send more Fathers into Courland; but, after all his efforts to gather new recruits had failed, and the Government had practically destroyed his novitiate, the Vicar-General could not or would not fulfill a promise made at a time when the future looked bright and he was justified in making

it. The Saint's refusal in this instance may partially account for the action taken by the diocesan Bishop on July 22, 1799, by which Fathers Rudolph and Wichert and the cleric Kaminski were declared dispensed from their religious vows. Kaminski was sent to the ecclesiastical seminary at Illuxt to continue his studies, but he seems to have been wholly unaware that, by virtue of the bishop's dispensation, he was no longer a Redemptorist. There is good reason to believe, however, that certain other regrettable circumstances not altogether of an irremediable nature compelled the two Fathers to abandon the Congregation. The Saint, powerless to change matters, had simply to deplore the defection of two sons to whom the restraints of the religious life had become insupportable. The Courland enterprise, undertaken under such bright auspices, was but another bitter disappointment added to the many that he had already experienced.

Another invitation was extended by the Archbishop of Mohilev, who proposed a foundation in White Russia. The Vicar-General was likewise requested to establish a house in Ermland, and, toward the end of 1799, he went thither in person to acquaint himself with conditions there. He wrote to Litta that he was satisfied with everything; he had not found any evidence of corrupt morals, and the clergy and people were good at heart; but he could not accept this new post until the Congregation possessed a novitiate in Germany.

His only venture in Southern Prussia was a small hospice at Radzymin, in the vicinity of Warsaw, to which he assigned two Fathers and a lay-brother in 1798.

A similar post, likewise in the vicinity of the city, was forced upon him by the Government. This was the church in Lutkowka, which included within its parish limits three or four near-by villages, and numbered in all two thousand Catholics. The Proprietor of Lutkowka, Baron Hoyol, who at that time was President of the administration at Warsaw, was directly responsible for this move on the part of the Government; for, although a Protestant himself, he had requested that the church be given over to the charge of some of the Fathers from St. Benno's. The Vicar-General felt little inclined to enter upon this enterprise, as he was then about to

set out for Germany (1802). Hofbauer departed for Germany without coming to any decision in the matter; but Hoyol would not yield. Accordingly, toward the end of 1802, Father Huebl received the Supreme Command from Berlin to accept within two weeks the foundation which had been offered at Lutkowka, and was reminded that the King of Prussia possessed full sovereignty not only over the secular, but also over the regular clergy. There was nothing to do but submit. Consequently, in January, 1803, the foundation was established with Father Schroeter as Superior, and two other Fathers, two clerics, and a lay-brother constituting his community. From the very beginning the advent of the Redemptorists proved a boon and blessing to the people for miles around, and Hofbauer was able to report to Pagani, that they were laboring there with wonderful success. "Before our Fathers took charge of this parish," he writes, "the poor farmers in that section never saw a Catholic priest for six months at a time. The result is, that they are so little instructed that they are Catholics in name only, since they scarcely know the rudiments of the Faith."

The Community at St. Benno's during these years was very small. According to a report drawn up in October, 1802, before Lutkowka had been accepted, there were at St. Benno's fourteen priests, six clerics, two novices, and four lay-brothers. To this number must be added also the little Community at Radzymin, making in all scarcely thirty professed members, after fifteen years of untiring effort to establish a vigorous Transalpine Congregation.

But all these untoward events, all these disappointments and mishaps and rebuffs are only the shadows in the picture of the Saint's life during these years: there were bright spots as well — all the brighter because of the surrounding darkness — the unwearying priestly zeal, the apostolic fortitude, and the Christlike charity toward all, with which the Saint labored at Warsaw in the cause of truth and right. These, too, deserve at least a passing glance, before we accompany him back to Germany.

The four years from 1798 to 1802 may be considered the climax of his labors at St. Benno's. When he was not absent from home, he took upon himself the lion's share of the work,

and urged the others to action more by his example than by his commands. Hand in hand with this indefatigable spirit of labor went a genuine love and exercise of the interior life; and this unusual union of the activity of Martha with the spiritual calm of Mary's contemplation, was the real source of that charm which rested upon St. Benno's and constantly attracted the people thither in ever-increasing numbers. A lady of the Polish nobility had as a young countess frequently visited St. Benno's. In her advanced years, she wrote the following in her reminiscences of Father Hofbauer: "Whenever I recall him, I see him before me as a venerable priest, refined and awe-inspiring in his deportment, but withal very plain. Wherever he went, he radiated the beauty of peace, and spread about him the consolation that springs from divine love. His language was always simple, he never made use of choice expressions; still, his words always manifested great depth of mind, and invariably awakened immediate confidence. The love of Our Lord Jesus Christ which filled his heart, shone forth in all his actions, but there was about him no trace of singularity or affectation. Purity of soul, peace of heart, the radiance of that holy joy which is born of the intimate union of man with his Maker, beamed from his countenance. The Holy Spirit had bestowed upon him a special talent for directing souls in the ways of virtue and holiness, and he toiled on with unrelenting fervor, granting himself no rest or respite until his physcial energy was exhausted."

Everywhere he lent a helping hand. Sometimes, particularly when some special guest had been invited to dinner or supper, he might be seen, girded about with an apron, standing at the kitchen-stove, trying to improve somewhat on Brother Emmanuel's culinary art. From the kitchen he would go directly into the pulpit. Every day he himself conducted the principal service for the Germans, which consisted of a sermon and a solemn High Mass at a late hour in the morning. The theme for his sermon he took by preference from the Epistle of the preceding Sunday, explaining only one or two verses at a time, yet "with such clearness and skill," as one of his audience testifies, "that all difficulties disappeared, and his hearers were all enlightened and satisfied, but sorry when they

perceived the sermon drawing to a close. His delivery was earnest, convincing, and at times vehement: no one could resist him." Occasionally he would put questions to the children and the students that chanced to be present, in order to arouse greater interest and attention; but he virtually placed the correct answer upon the tongue of the one thus questioned. The diligent and attentive were praised; the slothful reprimanded. The whole discourse proceeded after the manner of a familiar conversation.

As confessor he was very much in demand, not only at St. Benno's, but at other churches as well. The Fathers were regular confessors to a number of Sisterhoods in Warsaw, among them the Benedictines, the Salesians, and the Carmelites. The Carmelite nuns especially were great admirers of our Saint. Father Podgórski was their regular confessor, but in difficult cases, the Vicar-General himself was called to the rescue. In connection with Father Podgórski's duty as confessor to these nuns, an amusing story is told. On one occasion, try as he would, he could not succeed in quieting Sister Josepha Zdziarska, who was wo-begone and all distraught with scruples. He sent for Father Hofbauer. The Saint called for the nun, glanced at her sunken features, and with a twinkle in his eye, said: "Sister Josepha should frequently have chicken at her meals, and she should be permitted to sleep a great deal; then she will soon get over her scruples." The poor nun blushed crimson at this simple diagnosis of her spiritual infirmity, but the Superioress agreed to furnish the prescribed remedy, which evidently cured the patient. Sister Josepha, recuperated spiritually and physically, reached an advanced age, and repeatedly held the office of Superioress.

Conversions to the true religion opened up another wide field for the exercise of the Saint's zeal and charity. The German Protestants loved to attend the divine services at St. Benno's, drawn thither at first by the beauty of the church music. Led to the feet of Christ in the tabernacle by this wholly natural motive in the beginning, many of them there received from the inspiring sermons of the Saint the first supernatural impulse to return to the true faith of their fathers. Among those who begged for baptism were also not a few Jews.

Sometimes Father Hofbauer undertook to instruct them in the Faith, but usually this task devolved upon Father Lenoir, who had mastered the oriental languages and was well versed in the Talmud. Many of these Jewish converts, however, lacked sincerity. Under cover of the frequent political changes that had descended upon the city during the previous few years, the Jews had poured into Warsaw in increasing numbers. With that commercial instinct for profitable barter and successful bargaining which seems native to the race, they gradually came into full control of all the business, with the result that they were thoroughly and heartily hated by the Polish Catholics. Many of them, in seeking admission into the Church, were inspired, it is to be feared, by motives that were far from spiritual; baptism seemed an open door to peace with their Catholic neighbors and to material gain, and many of them did not hesitate to step across that threshold, little knowing, and caring less what spiritual advantages and obligations lay beyond. One may readily understand, therefore, that neither Hofbauer nor the other Fathers gleaned much consolation from conversions of this kind. The Saint himself at times could not help repeating the saying then current in Warsaw, that " every converted Jew ought to be drowned in the Vistula immediately after baptism." As the years went on, the number of non-Catholics seeking admission into the Church grew to such an extent, that special rooms where instruction might be given had to be rented in a neighboring house, — one for the Protestants, and one for the Jews.

During these years, too, Hofbauer turned much of his attention to the Congregation of Oblates, to which he had given a " local habitation and a name " shortly after coming to Warsaw. He took advantage of his journeys to Germany and Austria to win new members for it all along the line of travel. Thus it happened that these Oblates were to be found, not only in Poland, but likewise in Silesia, Moravia, Bohemia, Suabia, Vienna, Carinthia, and The Black Forest. He now sought to bestow upon it a more distinctive and individual character by definitely drawing up the rules and statutes by which the society was to be governed and its members to be guided in their particular sphere of religious activity, so that without

undue delay he might obtain for it the approbation of the Holy See. Owing to its exclusive character, however, and the severe conditions for membership, the number of these Oblates could not have been very large. As is expressly stated in the statutes, only such Catholic men whose faith and devotion to Holy Church had stood the test of time, could be admitted: "As this Society is not merely a so-called confraternity, but a Congregation of select persons, only persons of tried virtue are to be admitted; that is to say, such only as are filled with the spirit of Jesus Christ and whose souls hunger and thirst after justice." The character and worthiness of the aspirants was to be examined into at the conferences. The novitiate was to last for one year; the profession to be made only after two years.

The formula of profession contains the vow of steadfast fidelity to the Holy See, and the promise, "as far as lies in my power to edify my neighbor by good example and the constant practice of virtue, to reclaim my deluded fellow-man from the false principles and corrupt maxims that govern the world to-day by proclaiming and spreading the teachings and tenets of the Holy Roman Catholic Church, to instill into others the principles of virtue and right living, to promote the cause of Catholic literature by reading and causing to be read such books as are written according to the spirit of Jesus Christ, and, in a word, to endeavor everywhere and at all times to destroy the reign of sin in the hearts of men."

The Oblate received a new name in religion, and a distinctive garb; the latter, however, was to be worn only in his own home. The members residing in the same country or province were under a Director, and had an appointed place for their meetings and conferences. The acting Vicar-General of the Redemptorists was, by virtue of his office, the Supreme Director. Deceased members were generously aided by the prayers of the living, who received Holy Communion and assisted at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass for the eternal repose of their souls. The Director was instructed, at the death of any member, to notify all the members of his section or province, and appoint the day when the deceased member was to be recommended to God at special services. A peculiarity

of this lay-organization was, that membership was to be kept secret, " for," say the statutes, " just as the wicked make use of this secrecy to undermine religion and morality, so should virtue and Christian zeal endeavor by this same secrecy and by the concealment of their purposes, to counteract and destroy vice." [2]

Hofbauer petitioned the Holy See to grant special privileges to priests belonging to the Congregation of Oblates. " In some of the provinces of Germany and Poland," he says in the document he sent to Rome, " nothing is more needed or more to be desired than a clergy burning with zeal for the House of the Lord and fervent in the fulfilment of the duties of their state. As it is, they are for the most part lukewarm and careless in matters that pertain to the spiritual life, with the result that souls, redeemed with the Precious Blood of Jesus Christ, are neglected and allowed to wander from the path that winds upward to life eternal into the broad and easy way that hastens down to death and perdition. What is needed above all things else, is to lead the clergy back to a realization of their tremendous responsibility, by inducing them to devote themselves regularly to meditation on the duties of their state, to urge them to make the spiritual exercises at least once a year, and thus unite into one moral body the priests whose labors carry them into all sections of the country and who are forced to live far removed from one another."

One of the specific works of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer — the work of giving Missions, in the strict sense of the term, to the souls most neglected and deprived of the aids of religion, — much to the regret of the Saint, had heretofore to be disregarded. The very word, " mission," as we have seen, was anathema to the ears of a hostile government. With the dawn of the new century (1800), however, the Vicar-General finally decided that the time had come when even this work could and should be attempted, so far as the number of Fathers at his disposal would permit, and provided the civil

[2] Beroldingen seems to have been the Saint's counselor, when the final statutes were drawn up. In one of his letters to Hofbauer, Beroldingen earnestly urges him to complete the statutes. He insists especially that membership must be kept secret, and refers to the Freemasons for proof of what can be accomplished by this secrecy.

authorities and the pastors themselves did not create too much opposition. Consequently, from about the year 1800, we find the Fathers from St. Benno's going about from place to place in their distinctive rôle of Missionary Priests of the people. Thus, in the fall of 1801, they conducted missions in a parish church in Warsaw and in two out-lying country parishes.

The missions in the two country parishes were given by Father Huebl and five other missionaries, — the one lasting fifteen days, and the other thirty days. The phenomenal success in each case was a revelation. During the progress of the exercises eleven thousand persons received the Holy Sacraments. Writing to Italy concerning one of these missions, the Saint stated that the pastor of the parish was the chief opponent of the mission; but that after listening to the great sermon the evening of the first day, he hastened to the room of the missionaries, fell upon his knees, embraced their feet, and wept so profusely and bitterly, that for fully fifteen minutes he was unable to speak coherently.

After this auspicious beginning, missions were conducted every year from November to May in the country parishes of Southern Prussia. It was found necessary, however, to subordinate these missionary activities beyond the city to the labors in Warsaw itself, which invariably claimed the services of the ablest Fathers in the community. The pulpit there was usually occupied either by the Vicar-General himself, or by Father Podgórski or Father Blumenau.

Nearly all the Polish sermons in the afternoon were preached by Father Podgórski, who as a rule selected for his themes the more serious subjects of the mission-sermons. When he preached, his words were not soon or easily forgotten. It was a saying among the people, that Father Podgórski drove home the chief points of his discourse as with a sledge.

The principal sermon in the morning during these years was delivered by Father Blumenau, who, although in delicate health, distinguished himself soon after his ordination, in 1797, as an earnest and ready speaker in the pulpit. His ardent, impetuous temperament and his natural oratorical powers, here served him in good stead. His memory was so retentive and his diction so fluent that, on several occasions when the Vicar-

General had discoursed to the congregation in German, he immediately mounted the pulpit and delivered the same sermon in Polish.

Father Huebl, the Rector of the House, preached less frequently than the others: the field of his greatest conquest was the confessional, where he was in constant demand. Among his regular penitents were many of the nobility and several Prelates. With the passing years, during which he had met with all sorts of experiences, this highly gifted Father's mind had become a veritable store-house of knowledge. The Ordinary of Warsaw regarded him as an authority on all theological questions. He was one of the twelve examiners of the candidates for ordination, and without his approval no one was easily admitted to Sacred Orders. He wrote text-books on Logic and Metaphysics for the use of his own clerics, and was able to converse fluently in seven languages. On account of his gentle and kindly disposition, his own brethren were wont to refer to him as "the mother of the Congregation." His evenness of temper, good common sense, and sweetness in administering a deserved reprimand, made him the right man to step into the breach and set matters aright, whenever difficulties arose in the management of the House. The Saint, knowing his own fiery and impulsive nature, preferred to let Father Huebl act in such cases. And this he did with reason; for, when anger unexpectedly took hold of him, he would interrupt everything, and regale those about him with a severe verbal castigation. His terrific diatribe against the unjust interference of the government, uttered when he was under arrest at Cracow, is an example in point.

The temporalities and material wants of the community were in the hands of Father Jestersheim, who was also in charge of the church-choir. He had the reputation of being a very close and sparing Minister. St. Benno's, however, at that time had need of such a man, as the community was barely able to exist on its scant income, and anything like superfluity or abundance was entirely out of question.

The so-called "chimney-tax" on the buildings owned by the Bennonites had long been in arrears. After repeatedly serving notice on the Fathers to no avail, the Magistrate, in 1802,

finally enforced the law against them. Hofbauer declared his inability to pay. The result is described in a report of the officials sent to investigate the matter: "The houses on which the chimney-tax is overdue bring no rent whatever, as they are partly uninhabitable and partly occupied by poor children. To sell the houses would prove a senseless proceeding, for at most one hundred rix-dollars would be realized from their sale, and the chimney-tax in arrears amounts to one hundred and four rix-dollars. It is suggested that the amount be deducted instead from the yearly allowance, which, dating from the time of the Polish régime, does not exceed four thousand florins, and is the only fixed income that the Fathers possess. There is no other source of income. The two houses in the old section of the city cannot be taken into account, as they have already been seized by the creditors, and are soon to be sold. Moreover, the expenses of this Institute are enormous, since sixty persons are here daily supplied with food and clothing. The religious who conduct the Institute and provide for its wants, are themselves so utterly poor that frequently they do not know whence to procure food for their own table on the morrow."

Upon receipt of this report the Magistrate ordered that all taxes owing the Government be canceled, and that the Bennonites be exempt from these taxes for the future.

As is evident, then, the Vicar-General and his large community literally lived day by day from hand to mouth. Always in straitened circumstances, Father Jestersheim became at times almost frantic with worry and anxiety. Naturally, his efforts to keep the wolf from the door were rendered no easier by the fact that the Vicar-General distributed alms with open-handed generosity and lavish unconcern for his own wants. When the Minister remonstrated with him, he always had the same answer: "Give, and it shall be given unto you — do you not know that these are twin-sisters?" Years afterward he was heard to remark: "I was very poor in those days, but never so poor that I did not have something to give to others." Days came, however, when the empty coffers and equally empty larder filled even the Vicar-General with alarm. But such critical times served only to bring out in stronger

light the Saint's childlike confidence in God, and were occasions when the household witnessed some very touching scenes. On one such occasion, he knelt before the altar, and after a fervent prayer knocked at the door of the Tabernacle, saying: "Lord, help us; now is the time to do so!" And this help never failed. Frequently assistance came at the last moment from a most unexpected quarter, and at times in an almost miraculous manner. The alms for the children had for the most part to be collected from house to house. The Vicar-General oftentimes undertook this begging-tour himself, with no thought for his own dignity, and cheerfully bearing the humiliations which it entailed.

An obscure but very important work in the community was entrusted to Father Passerat. Appointed Lector at first, he was soon advanced to the more responsible office of Master of Novices. By nature and by grace he was eminently fitted for this particular work. During the seven years during which he filled this office, from 1796 to 1803, he rose to an unusually high degree of saintliness. Withdrawing himself almost entirely from the external labors of the sacred ministry, he lived with his novices at Warsaw in the strictest kind of retirement. In his old age he admitted to one of his confrères, that from his thirtieth to his sixtieth year, he uninterruptedly enjoyed the gift of contemplation. Asked why God had thus favored him above others, he replied: "Because I had need of this grace in order to direct others in the ways of God." When he himself was a novice, he had cultivated the spirit of prayerfulness to such an extent, that he almost literally followed the injunction of the Saviour in the gospel, and "prayed always"; indeed, repeatedly during that year of his own probation, the sacristan found him in the early morning still on his knees at the church-door. Little wonder, then, that as director of others, he was indefatigable in instilling this same spirit of prayer into the young souls whose religious training had been entrusted to his wisdom and guidance. He summed up his whole idea of the novitiate in these two spiritual maxims — the first applying to the novices, the second to their Master and Director: "The first means to advance in the spiritual life is prayer; the second, the third, the fourth, the tenth, the hundredth means

is the same — prayer, prayer, prayer, at all times and everywhere." "Good example and constant prayer for the progress of the novices," he would say, "constitute the ideal Novice-Master."

The Vicar-General frequently gave the novices an opportunity to see from actual experience how deep and genuine was the humility of their Master, by humiliating him in the presence of the entire community. The religious spirit that reigned at St. Benno's in consequence of this sort of direction, may be gleaned from the following incident. Father Passerat once commanded one of the novices, as a penance, to remain kneeling before the door of the church until he was sent for. Passerat forgot all about the poor novice until evening. In consternation he hurried to the church-door, tenderly embraced the poor novice, and humbly begged his pardon.

Severe interior trials contributed not a little to the saintly Novice-Master's progress on the road to perfection. Love for his home, for example, seems to have occasioned him many an anxious hour. His elder brother, who had fled with him from France, died shortly after his ordination. His mother, who was then in her seventy-fifth year and constantly in poor health, longed to have Father Passerat, the only child left to her, near her. To see his mother once more before her death, was Passerat's daily prayer and his most ardent desire; but the coveted permission was denied him. Further on, we shall have occasion to see what a high degree of detachment the young religious had attained and how well he knew how to rise above the demands of flesh and blood.

St. Benno's in Warsaw, notwithstanding all the efforts of the Saint to establish a separate House of Studies, continued to be the home of clerics preparing for the Sacred Priesthood. Their education and training were entrusted chiefly to the French Fathers. To help them overcome their timidity, and to give them practice and facility in public speaking, the Vicar-General, as he remarks in one of his reports, soon introduced them to the practical work of the ministry, by appointing them to such minor duties in the church, as that of explaining the Way of the Cross, giving catechetical instructions, and teaching the people how to make the examination of conscience.

About the year 1800, the Fathers at St. Benno's, in addition to their many other duties, took over the direction of a seminary for the secular clergy. After the institutions formerly conducted by the Jesuits in the adjacent countries had been closed, many students of Theology crossed the border and wended their way to Warsaw. Many of these hailed from Ermland, and of these not a few able, ambitious youths, joined the Fathers at St. Benno's. Among these were Father Schroeter and Father Blumenau, already introduced to the reader, and the three brothers Langanki. Concerning this seminary which was taken over by Hofbauer, however, no further particulars have been preserved, except that it was directed for four years by Father Podgórski. From one of the Saint's letters to Father General we learn that this additional burden on the community really proved to be a blessing in disguise, for he writes: "This work has placed our House here on a firmer foundation under the reign of the present King of Prussia. Other religious Orders have similarly secured and maintained their existence in this manner. The Government is in favor of the education of youth, and readily extends its protection to the Institutes engaged in this kind of work."

Only during the first few years after the school for the poor was opened were the pupils there taught by the Fathers themselves. Thereafter the Vicar-General employed as teachers those of the students who had applied for admission into the Congregation, requiring them to continue in this capacity for at least a year or two, before advancing them to the novitiate. During this time the Saint had ample opportunity to study their character and discover by what spirit they were led. How this arrangement was made to dovetail with the prescriptions of the above-mentioned School-Reform, is hard to explain.

It would be unjust to measure the school at St. Benno's, or any other school of those days, by the standards of education which govern our school-system to-day. Comparing the two systems, teachers and pupils at that time must have been severely handicapped indeed; and considering all these drawbacks, — including the strictures and continual interference of the civil authorities, — the results achieved at St. Benno's schools must be pronounced as nothing less than astounding.

At the very least, the schools were a great blessing for the city. From six to seven hundred children of the city — about four hundred boys and three hundred girls — who would otherwise have been entirely neglected, received at St. Benno's not merely the most necessary instruction in all the elementary branches of study, but the more important advantage of a thorough religious training as well. During the comparatively brief sojourn of the Redemptorist community in Warsaw, no less than eleven thousand children passed through the schools at St. Benno's.

St. Benno's, with all the distraction of a populous city and all the activities incidental to busy parish life, was suitable neither for a Novitiate nor for a House of Studies. No one realized this fact more fully, or regretted it more keenly, or strove more energetically to correct it, than the Vicar-General himself. It was to be expected that sooner or later it would lead to serious misunderstanding with the Superior General. The crisis, however, was hastened by reason of the complaints lodged against the Saint by several members of his own community. Not all his confrères willingly subscribed to the many and various activities which, as time wore on and the people came to know and value the unselfish devotion of the Fathers, had gradually developed at St. Benno's. The two Frenchmen, Passerat and Vannelet, in particular, who were drawn more naturally to the sweet repose of the contemplative life, were annoyed at the constant disturbances in the church and in the convent. Passerat even felt himself in conscience bound to send to the Father General a list of certain activities in which the Fathers at St. Benno's engaged, but which, in his opinion, were contrary to the spirit of the Rule. A novitiate and the study of Theology under circumstances such as existed at St. Benno's, he declared to be mere travesties of the reality.

Passerat entrusted the transmission of his letter to Monsignor Litta, who, at that time, 1799, was returning from St. Petersburg by way of Warsaw. But the Novice-Master had forgotten one thing: he had not taken into his reckoning the fact that Litta was a staunch friend and admirer of Hofbauer's. The good Prelate forwarded Passerat's report to Blasucci from Venice, but not until he had previously affixed to it his own

sane comments, of which the following are extracts: "Your House at Warsaw," he wrote, "is flourishing more and more. The people crowd the church to hear the word of God and to receive the Holy Sacraments." The Vicar-General, he conceded, is hasty and somewhat blunt and positive in his demands, and himself admits that he places special stress on the importance of the external labors of the sacred ministry. But he continued, "your Father Hofbauer is an apostolic man in the fullest and truest sense of the word; he performs miracles by his extraordinary fervor." After a brief account of the "Perpetual Mission," he added: "The efforts of the Fathers to develope every phase of Catholic life among the people, naturally multiplies the number and variety of their pastoral activities, and for this reason, these efforts may seem, to a man of narrow vision, misplaced and overdone; but I, for one, cannot judge them so, when I consider the spiritual need of that downtrodden country in which so many priests labor so little in the Master's vineyard." He would not venture to advise the Superior General to cause any part of that work to be discontinued, for, he wrote, "by so advising you, I should fear to be opposing the will of God and to ruin the work which His Divine Grace has begun in the hearts of men."

Litta took the ground from under the complaints of Passerat by very correctly emphasizing the main point in Hofbauer's defense, namely, that the Saint himself had spared no pains in trying to find in Germany a suitable site for the Novitiate and the House of Studies. Father Passerat he praised as a man of great piety and unusual fervor; "but," he added, "he is a Frenchman, and it is well known that the priests of that nationality invaribly insist that everything be done everywhere as it is or was done in France; they cannot understand things except through a French medium, and they cannot adapt themselves to circumstances."

Litta was merely voicing the Saint's own sentiments, who made no secret of opposing the principles of the French clergy. He always claimed that the French Revolution could have been prevented, had the priests of France labored more zealously. Above all else he condemned the French for their Jansenism, which he detested with all his soul. "The French,"

he claimed, "are all more or less tainted with Jansenism." Of Passerat he wrote in a letter to Rome: "He is much given to prayer, but he could work a great deal more." In justice to Passerat, however, it is but fair to state here, that the extraordinary activity of his later years more than made up for this defect of which Hofbauer complained.

With Father Blasucci, however, Passerat's opinion seems to have possessed more weight than Litta's. Hofbauer's numerous adventures into pastoral fields so new and varied, were, after all, not in harmony with the principles that governed the Congregation in Italy. The Chapter of 1793, by which the Redemptorists of the Papal States and those of the Neapolitan Kingdom were reunited into one body, had annulled the decree of the Chapter of Scifelli (1785), with the result that such activities as the conducting of schools and asylums were forbidden as incompatible with the Rule. By some remarkable disposition of Providence, the Vicar-General had never heard of this prohibition. The Acts of the Chapter, which he had frequently tried to obtain, had never been sent to him from Rome.

Another feature of the work at St. Benno's which was entirely beyond the comprehension of the Italian mind, was the great number of sermons. That it should be necessary to preach five sermons every day, and that this program should be continued without interruption, week after week, month after month, and year after year, must have seemed a veritable monstrosity to the Italians, as in Italy fewer sermons by far were preached than on this side of the Alps.

Father Blasucci's objections to conditions at Warsaw were cast along these lines, when he next wrote to the Vicar-General. His letter, dated February 15, 1800, was lengthy, but very kind. He emphasized the necessity of a Novitiate separated from the other buildings, where it would be possible for the novices to live in retirement and recollection. He stressed the importance of thorough studies for the clerics preparing for the sacred ministry, and called his attention to the prohibition to conduct schools. He disapproved too much preaching: two sermons a day, one for the Poles and one for the Germans, in his opinion, ought to be quite sufficient.

The welfare of immortal souls, the interests and good of the

Congregation, compelled the Saint to take issue with his accusers and rise to the defense of St. Benno's. Taking up the question of the school, he could plead innocent of any violation of the Rule, since he was all the while ignorant of the prohibition of the last Chapter. Even had he known of the prohibition, the peculiar circumstances in which the Redemptorists at Warsaw were placed, would still have justified him in waiving this point of the new ruling. "We should not be able to exist here," he wrote, "had we not undertaken the education of boys. Only by so doing can we preach the Word of God here. Our hopes of perpetuating the Congregation in these countries rest upon our assumed character of teachers and educators."

He defended the "Perpetual Mission" on the same grounds of necessity and expediency arising from the spiritual needs of the souls entrusted to his care. "In Catholic countries," he argued, "where the bishops are not hampered in performing their duty, such constant vigilance on the part of the pastor is not so necessary; but where the authority of the bishop is tolerated rather than recognized, and nothing is left undone to shackle his power and restrict its exercise, where the shepherd of the flock is prevented from mingling with and guiding his sheep, the dogs at least must be alert and keep on barking, lest the sheep become scattered and some of them wander from the fold. If with your own eyes you could see the deplorable religious conditions of this city, you would blame us, not for preaching too much, but for preaching too little, in spite of the fact that we do preach five times a day; and if you were here, laboring among and with us, you would soon discover that the people do not grow tired of listening to our sermons. This may perhaps be the case in other countries, where the people are well instructed and where they have nothing to suffer for their faith, and hence do not need the consolations of religion so much. Here, the Catholics, utterly abandoned amid the dangers that surround them and threaten the purity of their faith and their constancy in well-doing, desire nothing more ardently than to learn how to 'make sure their election and salvation'; consequently they continually hunger and thirst after the Word of God."

Referring to the spiritual and intellectual training of the clerics, he said: "The studies are in no way neglected. The fact of the matter is that our students always carry off first honors in the examinations of the candidates for ordination."

This fearless and straightforward rejoinder would probably have produced the desired effect, had not another and far more scathing denunciation of the Vicar-General and his methods threatened to fan the embers of Blasucci's indignation into a real conflagration. This time the accuser was Father Vannelet.[3] The young Frenchman saw at St. Benno's nothing but abuses and disorders, all of which he traced to their real source — the misguided zeal and unprincipled policies of Father Hofbauer. "It cannot be denied that the Vicar-General is a man of great zeal," he wrote; "would to God that all priests were only like him! But he has his own system in everything, and from that system it is absolutely impossible to wean him. We have no other rule than his will and his caprice. Not only the studies, but the entire community-life is suffering because of the numberless external labors in the ministry. He bestows no thought or attention upon anything but the divine services. He is not at all concerned about the exact observance of the order of the day or of the other injunctions of the Rule. He places greater stress on the external labors of the ministry than on meditation."

Vannelet, it seems, wished for a transfer to one of the Italian Houses, where he might imbibe the real spirit of the Venerable Alphonsus.

Apart from its evident exaggerations and generalizations, Vannelet's report proves that an order ideal in every respect did not as yet exist at St. Benno's. On account of the strenuous demands which the ministry made upon the Fathers' time and energy, the strict observance of the regular order in the convent was, of course, not always possible. Father Blasucci, who was personally acquainted neither with the

[3] The following passage from a letter written, in 1798, by Father Jestersheim to Hofbauer, may throw some light on the character of Father Vannelet: "Except for his extremely nervous condition, Father Vannelet is at present in the best of health. He keeps to himself and, if I judge right, is more inclined to lead the life of a hermit than to do active work in the vineyard of Jesus Christ." — *Monumenta Hofbaueriana*, I. p. 24.

Vicar-General nor with Father Vannelet, without taking time to reflect, threatened to expel the entire community at St. Benno's from the Congregation.

The Saint, for the time being, contented himself with going over the whole ground again, and explaining once more to his Superior the extraordinary circumstances responsible for the extraordinary conditions existing at St. Benno's. He closed with the words: "Viewing the whole situation in the light of these facts, I really do not see any reason why our community should be cut off from the body of the Congregation. If we were not sincerely devoted to the Congregation, could we not have spared ourselves all this trouble by acting as other religious communities act under the present Government, by withholding from your Paternity all information whatever concerning our mode of living here? No other religious community here in Warsaw ventures, as we have done, at the risk of being discovered and severely penalized, to circumvent the law prohibiting all communication with the Superior General. As you realize full well, we have always maintained a correspondence with the Superior General; we do so still, and we shall not leave off doing so."

It was, of course, the right of the Superior General to offer the Fathers the alternative of either living up to the strict injunctions of the Rule or severing their connections with the Congregation. There can be no doubt as to the choice Hofbauer would have made, had matters come to such a pass. But Father Blasucci was reassured once more that the Transalpine Community was making the best of a bad situation, and that the regular observance was not suffering more than was necessary. Hofbauer's calm, detailed analysis of that situation must have convinced him that there was at St. Benno's no arbitrary departure from the traditional spirit of the Congregation, but only a temporary suspension of certain points of Rule and custom made necessary by circumstances that could not be altered and conditions over which the Fathers had no control. He was satisfied, after giving Hofbauer a fair hearing, that the mere attempt to require the Fathers at Warsaw to conform in every respect to the Neapolitans, would mean nothing less than the immediate ruin of the largest and

most flourishing foundation which the Congregation possessed at the time.

In his reply of January 8, 1802, Father Blasucci did not touch again upon the points of controversy, but expressed his gratification at knowing that, in spite of the exceptional circumstances under which the Fathers were laboring, the Rule suffered no harm in consequence of the necessary departures from it. There is no doubt whatever that at the time the newly established Transalpine branch of the Congregation stood in imminent danger of being separated from the Mother-Congregation, as analogous cases from the history of the Congregation tend to prove. A less prudent and saintly Superior than Hofbauer would surely have suffered shipwreck on this rock. It is owing to his tact and steadfast fidelity to the Congregation that the further development of the Transalpine branch was assured, without being severed from the parent-stem.

It would be a mistake, however, to conclude, as some have done, that this regrettable controversy gave rise to a strained relationship between the Fathers at St. Benno's and their brethren in Italy. In principle the Superior General was right in taking the stand he did, since he was in duty bound to see that no new branch essentially different from the Congregation should be formed beyond the Alps and thus cause a new split. All this misunderstanding could have been prevented, if Blasucci had found it possible to carry out one of his most ardent desires — to visit the first Transalpine foundation in person. But his advanced age, the great distance, the unrest and insecurity of those years, and above all the extreme poverty of the Italian Houses, prevented him from making the journey.

In general, there was no lack of sympathy in the Italian communities with the joys and sorrows, the successes and failures of their confrères in the North. The Italian Fathers frequently sent greetings to St. Benno's. "Could we but fly to you and embrace you in the Lord," we read in one of dear old Father Tannoja's letters to the Saint. Tannoja was the first writer to draw the attention of the public in a printed work to Father Hofbauer's remarkable labors for the salvation of souls, while the latter was still living. To his *Life of Liguori,* com-

pleted in 1800, Father Tannoja added a supplement containing a history of the Transalpine Houses at St. Benno's and at Mitau, and the detailed accounts of these new ventures show with what attention and interest the Fathers in Naples followed the fortunes of the Fathers in the distant North.

To be obliged to discontinue the "Perpetual Mission" would have spelled disaster to the Catholic population of Warsaw. The unmistakable change that had been produced in many classes of the inhabitants as a result of its beneficent influence, proved that the Saint had understood the needs of the people from the very beginning, and had merely supplied what was really lacking to recall the masses to a realization of their dignity and duties as Christians and Catholics. Later he himself declared that after laboring there for ten years, there were to be found in Warsaw a great many Catholic men and women who were models of every virtue, and who would have been an ornament to the Church even in the first ages of Christianity.

The surest sign, however, that a marvelous change had been wrought in the city, and that the religious enthusiasm awakened at St. Benno's had taken a lasting hold on the imagination and hearts of the people and was spreading more and more, was the systematic warfare that the Freethinkers in Warsaw were beginning to wage against the Fathers there. The contrast between the religious principles instilled at St. Benno's and those advocated and held by the foes of the Church became daily more pointed, and resulted in a bitter opposition. Freethought and licentiousness suddenly found their supposed supremacy threatened. The feeling that reigned in these circles against the Fathers at St. Benno's may be judged from the following coarse description, at once a tribute of recognition and a diatribe and invective, written to a friend by one of the officials at Warsaw: "Just imagine! There exists here an Order, the Bennonites, nearly all of them Germans, who, in spite of the innate antipathy of the Poles to the Germans, have succeeded by Jesuitical trickery in making the Poles love them even more than they love their own priests, so that they are prepared to offer their very lives for these foreign priests. And yet, they have achieved this notable victory over prejudice by

very simple methods: 1. While the Polish priests are as a rule the laziest scoundrels living, these Fathers are intensely active; 2. the Bennonities are educated men; 3. they do not drink to excess, whereas the Poles prove themselves the most ignorant dunces on earth and are always drunk; 4. they know how to attract the people, for their church is open every day from seven o'clock in the morning till nine o'clock at night, and the services are made to appeal to the people, by reason of much singing, frequent preaching, and many incensations . . . ; moreover, they have a host of confraternities, both for men and for women of the lowest classes, and they make use of the confessional for the basest purposes." After this vile slur on the confessional, he goes on to describe a Crucifix highly venerated at St. Benno's, declaring that he would give a hundred ducats to gain possession of that hated image that he might "break it in two over the backs of those priests." The writer of this letter was none other than the renowned Frederick Zachary Werner, the Secretary to the Board of Finances at Warsaw from 1793 to 1805. A decade later Werner himself belonged to Hofbauer's circle!![4]

Hofbauer's own letters after 1800 leave no doubt that the war enkindled against him was in full progress. Thus he writes in June, 1800: "The Jacobins are spreading all sorts of evil reports about us. We are made the butt of jest in the theaters. Even the clergy, with the exception of the Bishop, the officials of the diocese, and a few canons, are ranged against us. We are openly threatened with the gallows." What actually transpired between this time and the terrible catastrophe of 1808, was, in a more brutal form, a foreshadowing of the diabolical conspiracy which was set on foot against the Redemptorists in Vienna about the year 1848. The religious were daily growing more odious, and their adversaries employed against them the usual weapons of attack, — ridicule, calumny, and menace. Individual instances of imprudence and misguided zeal which may have occurred, were exaggerated, generalized, and represented as intentional and typical. St. Benno's was vilified and decried to the public as the secret source from which had issued all the disorders and abuses then

[4] For this letter of Werner's see *Floeck*, I. p. 331.

rampant in the entire city. The Bennonites were accused of sowing discord in homes and families; their fanaticism was causing their adherents to neglect their family duties; they bribed their followers to donate their money and their silverware to the Church; and servants were instructed by them to steal for the benefit of the Church. The Fathers and their clients and supporters were jeered at in the public streets, and it is related that some of their most dastardly opponents even lay in wait for them with cudgels along the roadsides. At public masquerades and on the stage the one who won most of the plaudits was the Bennonite clown fully attired in the liturgical vestments. Libelous writings against the Fathers were spread broadcast among the people. The main purpose of all this antagonism was to bring the hated religious priests into disrepute with the Government and so put a speedy end to their spiritual activities. But, as has already been memtioned, this purpose was never attained. The Prussian Goverment was besieged with denunciations against the Fathers; not only were the Bennonites accused of causing disturbances of the peace and various disorders, but even serious moral delinquencies and revolutionary movements were laid to their charge. Indeed, so frequent and so insistent were the accusations launched against them, that a special committee was once sent to St. Benno's — in what year is not known — to investigate these charges. The findings of this committee, however, offered neither comfort nor encouragement to the forces of the opposition.

The center of all this opposition, the disturber of the peace, was naturally, the Saint himself, who had begun the entire movement. Most deeply hated by some as a religious fanatic, while revered most enthusiastically by others, the treatment of his person was a true picture of the two contrasting religious parties in the city. Extraordinary marks of respect were nothing unusual when he happened to pass through the streets of Warsaw. " Many," as Prusinowski writes, " endeavored to touch the hem of his garment, while others reverently kissed the same. Wherever he went, mothers with their little ones on their arms would fall upon their knees before him and ask his blessing." Hofbauer, recalling in after years

those troublesome times at Warsaw, was wont to say: "Many indeed there were that fell down and kissed my footprints; but there were fully thrice as many that covered me with mud: while some dishonored me too much, others honored me too much."

The inhibitions and interference of the Government prostrated Hofbauer with grief, and at times almost paralyzed his spirit for work. The fury of the Freethinkers, however, never affected him in this way. On the contrary, the very violence of their attacks convinced him that his efforts in the interest of immortal souls were not in vain, and urged him on to labor the more zealously and to combat the forces of evil. But what pained him most was that even among the clergy he found many opponents, some who openly took sides with the enemy, and some who stood idly by when they might have assisted him in the struggle.

The following incident may be taken as an illustration of the utter lack of sympathy with which the labors of Hofbauer and his religious brethren were viewed in certain ecclesiastical circles. Bishop Majewski was ordered by the King to send in a report on the position which the Bennonites occupied in the diocese. Among other things, His Lordship was asked, whether at the time of their admission into the diocese any special arrangement had been made regarding their privileges and duties, and, in default of such previous agreement, he was himself requested and empowered to submit a plan for regulating the divine services at St. Benno's. Here at last was an opportunity that might have been turned to the lasting advantage of the Fathers of the "Perpetual Mission." Majewski might have done a real service to the Bennonites by settling for all time the question of their ecclesiastical status in the diocese and perhaps winning for them the official recognition of the Government. But in the Report which he dispatched to the King on August 28, 1802, the bishop washed his hands clean of the whole situation and actually delivered the Bennonites up to the mercy of a Protestant Government. "The Bennonites," he replied, "had never obtained the consent of the Ordinary to establish a convent: he looked upon them as mere strangers without any legal domicile. There was therefore

no need of making any provision for their internal organization or of entering into the question of any charter of rights that they may possess. They are nothing but teachers, and as such the civil authority has the right either to permit their number to grow or to restrict their number, either to retain or to dismiss them. As to the divine services, the Ordinary indeed has the right to interfere, but this is impracticable and inopportune, owing to the favor which the Bennonites enjoy among the people. By so interfering the Ordinary would run the risk of losing the confidence of the people; and were he to introduce reforms among the Bennonites, he would place himself in a very odious light." "Consequently," he says, in conclusion, "the Bishop waives his right to offer any suggestions, and leaves the King to act in this whole matter as may seem prudent to him." [5]

The Saint, in a long letter written to the Nuncio at Vienna on May 9, 1802, points out the real reasons that lay at the bottom of this aversion of the clergy to St. Benno's and their work. He had discovered, not more than eighteen hours before, a secret sect carrying on its nefarious propaganda in the city. Their meetings were distinguished by rites of the most revolting and blasphemous nature. Some of the clergy were said to belong to this society. The Saint declared that these individuals were well known to him, and that the record of their past conduct lent weight to this suspicion. He did not, however, wish to seek further into the truth of these matters. The rest of his letter clearly shows how utterly he was thrown upon his own resources. His position in the diocese, outside the limits of his own community, was one of complete isolation, and this it was that induced him to turn to the Nuncio for advice, as to the proper course to pursue in coping with the new problem arising from his recent discovery.

[5] See above, p. 74. From this it does not follow that the Community at St. Benno's had established itself and increased its number of members in actual opposition to the ecclesiastical authorities. Majewski himself remarked in his Report that the Bennonites "with the encouragement of the former Consistory had noticeably increased in numbers and had even established a novitiate." Moreover, Hofbauer always acted in full accord with the Papal Nuncio at Warsaw. Whether or not Majewski is to be identified with the bishop whom Hofbauer, two years previously, had designated as the "friend" of the Bennonites (see above, p. 177), I cannot determine.

"The fact is," he writes, "that I have no one here to whom I can go for advice. I might as well try to carry water in a sieve as try to get results by bringing the matter to the notice of the ecclesiastical authorities; for by so doing I should only be accusing the pot to the kettle of being black. At least I could not safely or prudently do so until I had been convinced of the falsity of those matters of which the ecclesiastical authorities themselves are accused. To report the matter to the civil authorities is equally out of the question; for what a disgrace it would be to the priesthood to drag such revolting things before the eyes of non-Catholic judges! I should merely be bringing grist to the mill of the enemy. A third course is open to me. There exists here, besides the Episcopal Court, a court of third instance consisting of three judges appointed directly by the Holy See; but if I am correctly informed, even of these judges one or two are among the guilty parties.

"What, then, am I to do? To remain silent and to permit this sect, which has now been in existence here for several years, to spread its insidious poison would be criminal. If the reports that have been brought to me are true, conscience and the natural law itself compel me to speak and denounce this agency of Satan. When matters have come to such a pass that a prelate in high station publicly asserts, as I myself have personally heard from the lips of such a prelate, that no one but a fool nowadays considers simony a sin, you will understand that it is time for some one to take action. Accusations brought against priests who abuse the sacred tribunal of penance are utterly ignored. Prelates of the Church, in their ordinary conversations with seculars, are wont to brand as fanaticism the honest efforts of some few priests who are zealously laboring for the glory of God: they do all in their power to repress and undo, if they cannot prevent, whatever might prove beneficial to the salvation of souls.

"The venerable pastor of St. Andrew's, of whose excellent qualities I have previously made mention in a letter, was formerly my trusted friend and confidant. I valued his mature judgment and felt secure in following his counsel, for as a missionary of the Society of Jesus he has rendered invaluable

service to the cause of Jesus Christ and His Church in Pomerania, Russia, Lithuania, and Poland. But during the last Rogation Days he was stricken with apoplexy after offering the Holy Sacrifice, and expired at the foot of the altar. He was in his ninetieth year. With him alone we were wont to discuss matters of moment. Besides my own brethren in religion, there is now no one who is deserving of confidence. The Reverend Father Edgeworth de Tirmont, who attended Louis XVI at his execution in Paris, and who is now Confessor to the family of Louis XVIII, is a most worthy man, as learned as he is saintly; but he is not in Warsaw at present, and I cannot tell when he will return. He is now my most intimate friend, and to him I do not hesitate to lay open my whole heart.

" From the foregoing you will perceive how desperate is my plight. I beg you, therefore, not to cast me back upon my own judgment alone by refusing to advise me at least from a distance. You may the better understand the extreme delicacy of the situation with which I am confronted in regard to this matter, and accordingly may be the more inclined to assist me by your valued counsel, when I confide to you that if the reports that have been brought to me prove to be true, many even of the nobility will be among the guilty ones."

Vienna, as this episode again shows, was to Hofbauer still a city of refuge. His truest friends and sincerest benefactors resided there. With the passing of the years, however, the circle of his friends had taken on a somewhat altered complexion. Diesbach had died. In 1798, he was attacked by a hired band of villains and so horribly maltreated that he soon died as a result of the injuries he had received. The mere fact that his enemies had to resort to so violent a means of glutting their hatred is sufficient proof that he had not labored in vain. Penckler had him buried in the cemetery at Maria-Enzersdorf.

Father Sineo, in the meantime, had left Vienna. As Rector of the Italian Church there, we find in his stead Don Luigi Virginio, whom the Saint once called " the perpetuator and director of the work which Diesbach left unfinished." Hofbauer had not as yet formed a personal acquaintance with the new Rector, but he lost no time in introducing himself by letter. The

first interchange of letters sufficed to lay the foundations of a warm friendship between these two men. Don Virginio, with the enthusiastic support of Hofbauer, immediately took steps to secure an Italian Redemptorist as his assistant at Vienna. "This," he wrote to the Father General, "may be the wedge to force an opening for the Congregation into Vienna." Father Blasucci, however, did not entertain these high hopes, and had his misgivings about the prudence of sending any one Father, unaccompanied, to Vienna.

Moreover, a new Nuncio had come to Vienna toward the close of 1801 in the person of Monsignore Severoli. It is a genuine tribute to the character of Hofbauer and his circle of friends that Litta, in turning over his office to his old friend Severoli, directs the new Nuncio's attention particularly to Don Virginio, Baron Beroldingen, Baron Penckler, and Father Hofbauer. "Father Hofbauer," he writes, "is not in Vienna, but in Warsaw. He is most eager to obtain a House for his Congregation in one of the German States. His purpose is to train German missionaries who would be of invaluable service to the northern missions. . . . I commend him most heartily to your zeal, for I am fully convinced that by co-operating with him you would contribute greatly to a really holy work." [6]

In Severoli, Hofbauer found a staunch friend and generous patron. Possessed of much of that apostolic spirit which characterized the Saint, the new Nuncio counted himself fortunate in having discovered in Hofbauer, not only a zealous and trustworthy co-laborer, but also one who was eminently qualified to report on the conditions in Poland. In consequence of the abolition of the Polish Nunciature, the entire northern and northeastern mission fields, as well as those in the southeastern territory, were now comprised under the jurisdiction of the Nuncio at Vienna. In his very first letter to the Saint, under date of April 3, 1802, Severoli requests a comprehensive report "on everything that in any way touches the Church and our Holy religion," assuring him that any such information

[6] Letter of November 14, 1801. In this connection Litta speaks also of the Archduke Charles. "I am not personally acquainted with him," he says; "but I have heard that he is a very religious man, who is not ashamed of the Gospel."

will always be welcome. The welfare of the Church in Germany was very close to the heart of the Nuncio; hence Hofbauer's desire to establish a foundation in Germany met with his hearty approval. "In these sad times," he writes, "when the enemies of the Church have on all sides taken up arms against it, what can be more consoling and more heartening to a true Christian, and especially to a Bishop, than to learn that there are still some zealous men, who not only defend our holy religion as far as lies in their power, but also endeavor to propagate it. . . . Be of good heart, and labor the more to complete the work you have begun." He had asked for a detailed account of the labors at St. Benno's. "I cannot describe the happiness and consolation which your last report brought me," he wrote in reply to the Saint. "Now I congratulate myself on having encouraged you to establish a House at Jestetten. May your labors there mature to a rich harvest for the Church of God! Give to this holy work that you have undertaken an ever-growing fervor. Bear in mind, that in such a work as this even efforts that are beyond our human strength must ever fall far short of what we ought to do!" The Nuncio forwarded Hofbauer's report to the Papal Secretary of State, to be submitted "as a consolation to the Holy Father."

As appears from this letter, the negotiations for a new foundation at Jestetten, which had been broken off four years previously, were again resumed. Of all the projects to which the Saint set his hand during these years, that of Jestetten was the most promising. Treaties of Peace had been signed at Lunéville, in 1801, and at Amiens, in 1802, and the sky seemed to hold no threat of storm for the next few years. The Vicar-General, therefore, could safely proceed with his plan of establishing a foundation on German soil. The time had come to remove the novitiate from Warsaw, if it was to be saved from utter extinction.

Hofbauer's great desire at this time was to go to Vienna, where Count Schwarzenberg had his residence. Concluding a long letter to Don Virginio regarding the foundation at Jestetten, he wrote: "Pardon me for inflicting on you this minute account of our affairs; I desire nothing more ardently than to see

you and converse at length with you; but as this is at present impossible, I have taken this means of acquainting you with our labors, our set-backs, and our prospects. In the meantime, I can only hope that at some time before my earthly career is ended, I shall see you and converse with you face to face. Oh, when will it please the good God to grant the great wish of my heart — to see the Congregation firmly established in Germany! As soon as matters can be arranged for my departure, I shall set out for Vienna, where I hope to meet you, my dear Father, and my other dear friends, and to lay upon the tomb of Father Diesbach the tribute of my prayers and of my undying affection."

On November 11, 1802, the Vicar-General left Warsaw for his third journey to Germany in the interest of new foundations. What importance he attached to the outcome of this quest may be inferred from the fact that he took Father Rector Huebl with him as his companion, although the latter was almost indispensable at Warsaw.

In leaving Warsaw, he was practically bidding farewell to Poland forever, for God prospered his efforts and he succeeded at last in establishing a foundation on German soil. He was to return to St. Benno's, it is true, twice thereafter; but it was only because of unforeseen circumstances that the short visit which he had planned was changed into a protracted stay. If he had any permanent place of residence at all during the next six years, it was in Southwest Germany, and not in Poland.

It is scarcely necessary to remark that his eagerness to locate in Germany was in no way inspired by a dislike of Poland or its people. Poland was a second fatherland to Hofbauer, and as such he loved it in his heart of hearts. He had mastered the language of the people. The misfortunes of that unhappy land, and the injustice of which it was the victim, cut into the quick of his soul. It is related that once, when lost in meditation, he cried out: " Poor Poland! I see thee dripping blood! " But while he deeply sympathized with its sufferings, he never despaired of its ultimate triumph. Indeed, he declared positively that Poland would rise again to take its rightful place among the nations of the world. We ourselves have witnessed, in these our own times, the fulfilment of both these prophecies.

That the Saint, moreover, was equally right in contending that the future of the Congregation could be assured only in German territory, the later history of the Congregation has abundantly proved. For a whole century after the reorganization of Europe following the downfall of Napoleon, Poland groaned under the lash of the Russian Czar. Again and again during this period the Redemptorists endeavored to establish themselves in Poland; and again and again their efforts failed until the end of the World War. In the meantime, the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer developed and waxed strong in Austria, in German Switzerland, and in Germany proper.

Third Part

LABORS IN SOUTHWEST GERMANY — NEW FOUNDATIONS, JOURNEYS, PASTORAL CARES (1802–1806) — CLOSING OF THE TRANSALPINE HOUSES

1806–1808

CHAPTER I

LABORS IN THE DIOCESE OF CONSTANCE — THE FOUNDATIONS AT JESTETTEN AND AT TRIBERG — JOURNEYS (1803–1805)

HOFBAUER AND HUEBL remained in Vienna for two or three weeks after their arrival. Severoli, in his letter introducing the Saint to Wessenberg, the Vicar-General of the Diocese of Constance, describes his first impressions of Hofbauer's personality: " By name and by report I had known him for a long time; now I know him in person. . . . Even though the old saying, " *Minuit praesentia famam,*" be true in general, it does not apply in the case of this Religious. My confidential conversations with him revealed him to me as a man so superior to other men, that I should venture to compare him with but very few. There shines forth in him an extraordinary zeal for the Catholic religion, — a zeal that is tempered and directed by great wisdom and prudence. He is so filled with the desire to win souls to Christ, that I do not doubt that Divine Providence has specially set him apart to counteract the evils of these times of indifference and irreligion."

The Nuncio and his guest entered into a minute discussion of the religious and moral conditions of the North. It was not an attractive picture that Hofbauer unfolded to his gaze. " Much as I rejoice in discovering in this Religious a truly apostolic man," Severoli wrote to the Secretary of State in Rome, " I cannot but be grievously pained by his reports of our clergy and of the conditions of the Church in the Prussian States. These reports agree in every detail with those that have reached me from Berlin." As a result of his conferences with Hofbauer, the Nuncio sent to Rome a detailed account of ecclesiastical conditions in the North.

Count Schwarzenberg in his first meeting with Hofbauer was equally impressed by the character of the man, but referred him in all matters touching the Jestetten foundation to

the Director of his Government in the district of Klett, in which Jestetten was situated.

Hofbauer and Huebl left Vienna about the middle of December, followed indeed by the good wishes of the Nuncio, but also by his fears for the success of the new foundations. Severoli had his misgivings about the wisdom of establishing a House so near the "fatal Rhine." On December 21, the Saint wrote from Augsburg to Father General: "At St. Benno's all is well, so far as spiritual matters are concerned. The Word of God is still preached with great zeal and is bearing much fruit." On December 27, his patronal feast, he arrived at Constance.

On the following day he presented himself to the Director of the Diocese, Baron Ignatius Henry von Wessenberg, who was then just rounding out his twenty-eighth year.[1] Two typical representatives of the two diametrically opposed parties in the movement for ecclesiastical reform in their day now stood face to face. They possessed kindred traits of character. A strong will, an iron strength, an unlimited capacity for work, keen interest in ecclesiastical and religious conditions in the world about them, and an ardent desire energetically to step in with reforms, — all these were common to both. But their aims were as opposed to each other as day is to night. What Hofbauer wished to build up and consolidate, Wessenberg was determined to tear down and destroy altogether. Thoroughly enthralled by the ideals of the State Church and victimized by the false doctrines of the so-called "Illuminati," his only ambition was to impose upon the large diocese entrusted to him the Josephism of Austria — and that in a form even more radical than in Austria itself. With the conviction, undoubtedly sincere, that in his new position it was incumbent on him to remove the spiritual rubbish that had accumulated in the Church in the course of the centuries, he began his career by converting the Church itself into a heap of ruins.

[1] Bishop Max von Rodt, of Constance, who died in 1800, was succeeded by his Coadjutor, Charles Theodore von Dalberg. As Dalberg was much occupied at the time as Coadjutor of Mayence and Governor in Erfurt, he appointed Canon Wessenberg as his Vicar-General in the Diocese of Constance. Wessenberg assumed the government of the Diocese only in the beginning of 1802, having previously been invested with very extensive faculties.

At their first meeting, however, neither of these Vicars-General suspected that a great gulf yawned between them. The surface acquaintance which each formed with the other on this occasion, revealed only what was common to both, namely, their real desire to elevate the moral status of the clergy and the people. It affects one strangely nowadays, to read the letters in which Wessenberg and Hofbauer make known to the Nuncio their impressions of each other.

After thanking the Nuncio for the confidence placed in him, Wessenberg continues: "I set very much value on the high tribute which Your Excellency has paid to the singular virtues and fine spiritual character of Hofbauer. I was overjoyed to find this Reverend Father all that Your Excellency claimed for him, worthy of all esteem and deserving of every support that I can give him. The noble purposes which his Congregation seeks to serve, and which he desires to pursue also in these parts, correspond admirably to the needs of the present age. I am particularly pleased to learn that the better education of children by means of regular instruction in the principles of Catholic truth and Christian virtue is regarded as one of the chief labors of the Institute. The zeal with which Hofbauer and his companions devote themselves to this work seems to me as genuine as it is unselfish. I have therefore pledged my hearty support to Father Hofbauer and declared myself ready, so far as I am able within the limits of my present office, and in so far as the unsettled conditions of these our times will permit, to further his plans and make straight his way to success. I should indeed deem myself fortunate, if by so doing I should gain for myself the blessing of the Divine Ruler of the Church and Your Excellency's gracious approval."

Hofbauer, in turn, comments favorably on the friendly reception accorded him by Wessenberg. "To my great joy," he says, "I found this Prelate a man of good and sound principles. I must admit, that it came as somewhat of a surprise to me to discover in him so ardent a zeal for the glory of God, for the honor and exaltation of Holy Church, and for the salvation of immortal souls. If I judge right, he is about thirty-two years of age; and the fact that one still so young should possess these fine qualities in so eminent a degree is, to my way of

thinking, an added compliment to the man. While he showed interest in all the labors to which our Congregation is dedicated, he was particularly pleased to learn that we conduct the spiritual exercises for the clergy, and, with the approval of the Ordinary, also receive delinquent priests into our houses, in order to assist them in redeeming their past and winning back the ideals of their high station in life. He declared that he had long been searching for some Order to render this service to the diocese, but that he had found none that was willing and prepared to undertake this charitable task. He assured me that in taking up this kind of work, we should make the Bishop and the entire diocese indebted to us forever."

Wessenberg granted Hofbauer and Huebl all the necessary facilities for preaching the Word of God and administering the Holy Sacraments, and dismissed them with the assurance of his favor and support. On December 30, they arrived at Mt. Thabor, not far from Jestetten.

This was the third time that the Vicar-General had to face the difficulties incidental to the establishment of a new foundation. His first experience of this kind was at St. Benno's; his second, in Schwytz. He now again cheerfully put his hand to the work. The characteristic zest and ardor with which he threw himself into the labors of the apostolate were in evidence on the second day after his arrival, when he celebrated New Year's Day of 1803 by preaching three times in the convent-church of Mt. Thabor. And yet, he had need, on that occasion, of summoning to his aid every supernatural motive at his command, in order to drag himself into the pulpit; for the conditions which he found at Mt. Thabor were disheartening in the extreme.

As stated in a previous chapter, there was at Mt. Thabor a foundation of the Sisters of Perpetual Adoration, established by Helg. Adjacent to their convent stood the office-buildings of the Schwarzenberg Government. Viewing the two properties so providentially located, Hofbauer at once realized their possibilities. In his mind's eye he pictured himself as obtaining possession of the office-buildings and converting them into a monastery for his brethren. Along these lines he formulated his plans for the new foundation. If they were suc-

cessful, he would be spared the trouble and greater expense of building a house for his community, for the convent-church was already his for the asking.

As a matter of fact, this saving of expense was, under the circumstances, a question to be reckoned with. In consequence of the hostilities which the recent war had carried into this as well as into other dioceses, the convent had suffered terribly since his first visit to Mt. Thabor in 1798. The debt upon it had mounted to a staggering figure, so that the dissolution of the parish and the sale of both the church and the convent seemed inevitable. If matters came to this pass, all the plans and hopes of the Vicar-General were doomed to defeat. He was appalled when he considered the situation. On January 6, he wrote to the Nuncio at Vienna: "Perhaps God in His inscrutable wisdom ordained that the actual conditions which I find facing me here should remain hidden from me and my brethren while we were yet in Warsaw, and even after we had reached Vienna. For had I been fully aware and correctly informed of the real state of things, I should not be able to escape the reproach of foolhardiness for having undertaken this journey when I knew full well what was ahead of me. Nobody could have persuaded me to do so." Further on he says: "That the convent is still in existence to-day, is nothing short of a miracle, for it is actually staggering under the burden of its debt."

After considering the situation from every angle, however, Hofbauer decided to save the convent. Probably what helped him more than anything else to reach this decision, was the excellent spirit of the Nuns, who, in spite of all their troubles, quietly went about their various duties, and set before the people the example of truly virtuous lives. He fashioned his plans accordingly, assigning to the Nuns an important rôle in his future work as he sketched it in his mind. Shortly after his arrival he made known to the Ordinary his purpose of organizing these Nuns as a community of Redemptoristines, and of entrusting to them the education of girls and the care of orphan children. The present convent he proposed to remodel into a Retreat House for women.

These plans were heartily approved at Constance, but Hof-

bauer was requested to submit more detailed specifications. Here again we behold him, in a manner peculiar to himself, making bold plans, after he had scarcely placed his foot upon new soil.

From Mt. Thabor he turned his eyes hopefully to Switzerland, not far away. There a magnificent mission-field was beckoning the inmates of the two convents to send forth laborers. He communicated his thoughts to the Nuncio: "Here at Mt. Thabor we are not far removed from the borders of Protestant Switzerland, and the city of Schaffhausen lies not very far beyond. Perhaps God wishes now to show mercy to many in that country and has resolved to place a light here before their eyes. Perhaps, however, I am too sanguine in my hopes, and it may be that my wish is father to this thought of mine."

Hofbauer and his companions had for the time being no other residence than a half-dilapidated, previously unoccupied part of the Sisters' convent. But while he was formulating his plans for the future, he did not neglect the work that was at hand. He immediately introduced into the church services many of the features that were part of the regular program at St. Benno's. On Sundays and holydays there were usually four sermons — at the early Mass and at ten o'clock in the morning, and at three and five o'clock in the afternoon. The confessionals were soon besieged with eager penitents. The pastor of Jestetten, a Benedictine from Rheinau, became so enraged at this, that during the following Paschal season, he refused to administer Communion to those of his parishioners who continued to attend the sermons of the missionaries at Mt. Thabor. In a sharp letter to the Ordinary he demanded that the Fathers be forbidden to hear confessions. The Saint, at the request and wish of Wessenberg, in a written statement, undertook his own vindication. Wessenberg replied that his defense had been accepted and endorsed by the Episcopal Council, his course of action approved, and his position in the diocese confirmed. He was instructed to continue his work quietly and, if difficulties should arise, to have recourse directly to Wessenberg. The pastor who had made the complaint against the activities of the new arrivals was reprimanded, and

any future attempt on his part to interfere was forestalled by an order issuing from the Vicar-General's office on January 5, 1803, specifying the number and kind of sermons to be preached in the diocese. Thenceforth, it became obligatory on all pastors to preach sermons on all Sundays and Feast Days, and they were urged to read and explain the gospel of the day at the early Mass, and to give a special catechetical instruction to the young people in the afternoon. These reforms of the Vicar-General of Constance placed the stamp of official approval upon Hofbauer's zeal in the pulpit. The objections of Abbot Bernard III, of Rheinau, who supported the charges made against the Redemptorists by the pastor of Jestetten, failed equally of their purpose. Referring to Hofbauer, Wessenberg wrote to him: "I do not doubt that this venerable priest will be quite willing to consult with Your Grace and to come to an understanding with respect to the divine services. . . . Personally, I am convinced that the indomitable zeal of this religious can be turned to good account by Your Grace, and will yet prove of great service to you in the care of the souls committed to your charge. For this purpose, however, it will be necessary that we all work together in harmony; and this is my sincere, and indeed my only desire."

These difficulties, however, were of only secondary significance as compared with the problems of a temporal nature. How to provide suitable quarters for his own community and meet current expenses, while at the same time striving to cancel the immense debt on the Nuns' convent, was now his chief concern. Appointed administrator of the convent, he managed affairs so skilfully that the heaviest of the debts were soon a memory of the past. Everything but the most indispensable objects was turned into money to silence the insistent creditors. His interest in the Nuns did not stop with this. When leaving Warsaw he had drawn from the general treasury of the Congregation a sum of money to serve as first aid for the new foundation at Jestetten. A considerable portion of this sum he now advanced to the Sisters. After this sacrifice, however, there could be no thought of erecting a new building to house his own community. Relinquishing this idea, he now counted

on the generosity of the wealthy Prince to turn over to him the government-building adjoining the convent. There should have been no objection or obstacle to the Prince's doing this, as he had in his possession another building in which the offices of the administration might easily have been set up. But Herr Weinzierl, at Tiengen, the Director of the Administration, had other views. The officials of the small principality were blessed with large families, but for the most part were in no position, financially, to send their sons to a distance to be educated. There was only one elementary school in the whole district of Klett. A college at the seat of government, therefore, was almost a necessity. No one realized this better than Weinzierl, and he was quick to see in Hofbauer the man to fill a long-felt want. Accordingly, he tried to prevail upon Hofbauer to establish a Latin School at Tiengen. Under the circumstances, however, it was absurd even to consider the project, and Hofbauer very frankly told the Director that he could not and would not set his hand to educational work of any kind until he had secured a Novitiate and a House of Studies for the training of future professors and missionaries. Besides, Wessenberg was clamoring for a Retreat House for Priests. Mt. Thabor might well be made to serve all these purposes admirably. Hofbauer's arguments were reasonable, and Weinzierl finally acquiesced.

The Vicar-General's patience, however, was now put to a severe test. Weeks and months passed, but no word arrived to say that the Prince had agreed to the proposition. On March 8, the Saint wrote to Severoli: " I am much troubled at not having heard from Your Excellency. Nor have I received any answer from the Prince. If he does not wish to give us the house, let him say so; for in that event, we shall proceed to separate the half-dilapidated portion of the convent from the rest of the building by a wall, and arrange a few habitable rooms in it for the summer months. Perhaps, with God's help, we shall be able in the meantime to fit up these rooms even for the winter, at least to such an extent that my confrères will be protected from the snow and the cold. During the past two months as many as ten candidates have already applied for admission into the Congregation; but I could not admit them, as I did not know what the Prince intended to do about the

house. . . . I do, of course, suspect the reason that lies at the bottom of all this delay. Undoubtedly the Government objects to turning the house over to us as a gift, when it might well be sold. Consequently I anticipate all kinds of trouble and difficulty until I offer a price for the building." But in view of the cost of the repairs and alterations which would have to be made, it would have been a financial suicide to offer to pay for the building. Saddened by the turn of events, but still trusting in God, he continues: "I do not know what the good Lord has in store for us, nor do I see how Divine Providence will wisely bring order out of all this chaos and lead matters to a happy issue. Nevertheless, we continue to labor daily and diligently in the Lord's vineyard, and God is permitting us to see the fruits of our labors: these and the grace of God, are a sufficient reward for all our efforts. The people are responding admirably. Many come to make general confessions — a thing until now quite unheard-of in this vicinity. But I am not concerned about the present: my fears are rather for the future, lest when age and infirmity oblige me to lay down my burden, there should be no one to take it up, and continue the work that has been so auspiciously begun. I desire most ardently, therefore, to add to the number of our laborers. There is here a vast field to be cultivated, fertile and rich in the promise of golden harvests. The bark of Peter has here come into good waters: the fishermen of God need only use a little skill in casting out their nets, and they will be rewarded with a great draught of fishes. My zeal takes additional fire from the example of St. Charles Borromeo, who labored so untiringly for the Swiss, and who folded this people so lovingly to his fatherly heart! Perhaps God has destined us to reap the fruits of his labors for this people. This modern mission was undertaken under the auspices of Your Excellency. I beg of you not to desert us now, but to continue to lend us your support. In a financial and material sense, it is true, our condition at present is deplorable; but in a spiritual sense, we have every reason to rejoice and to be encouraged. Indeed, I should be less confident of the ultimate success of this work, if the world and the unruly passions of men stirred up less opposition against it."

The Saint visions a bright future for the Church in Swit-

zerland: "The Swiss, though as yet lying under the cloud of heresy, are nevertheless ripe for the harvest: they are merely waiting for the Lord to send forth the laborers to gather them into the Church. As soon as the political atmosphere here has cleared and conditions have become a little more settled, I hope to secure a church at Schaffhausen and another at Zurich, in which to hold the divine services for the Catholics of those districts. The best families in Schaffhausen lean toward the Catholic Church, and even the Zwinglians are not averse to giving their Catholic servants the opportunity of regularly attending to their religious duties.[2] Thus, from whatever angle we consider the circumstances surrounding us, the first and most important of our present duties is to gather together those that are desirous of devoting themselves to the service of the Gospel and to give them an opportunity of following the vocation God has implanted in their hearts.

"I am expecting the ten candidates of whom I made mention above, as they have very probably already set out on their journey hither. It was not possible for me to prevent their setting out, for in making application for admission they declared that they would come at once without awaiting an answer from me. They are quite willing to return to their homes, if we should find them ill-suited to our kind of life. They have a long journey before them.

"But, poor as I am, what am I to do with them when they arrive here? I have only two habitable rooms. I am not concerned about securing candidates; but where shall I house them, and how shall I provide food for them? I cannot imagine how these ten young men have so soon chanced to hear of our Congregation, for they live at a distance and they have never become acquainted either with me or with my brethren. This fact, and the further fact that at the present time religious houses are being suppressed in all parts of the

[2] In a letter to Warsaw, dated February 3, 1803, Father Huebl states that they had been at Schaffhausen on the first of the month and that they intended returning thither on the morrow in order to introduce Catholic services. "The people around Mt. Thabor are good people," he writes, "but they are not so educated and laborious as the people of Suabia. The new foundation is of great importance, on account of its being located so near to Switzerland and France."

realm, make me confident of securing a great number of vocations as soon as the Congregation has become known in Germany." [3]

The Nuncio exhorted Hofbauer to be patient, reminding him that God never deserts His own, and assuring him that in a case of this kind where the cause of God was at stake, the divine assistance would not be denied him. "Be of good heart, thou apostolic man and beloved of God," he wrote; "persevere in well-doing, and continue to plant the good seed, so that thou mayest in due season harvest what thou hast sown."

These words filled the heart of the Saint with indescribable joy, as we learn from the letter he addressed to the Nuncio in the beginning of April. After thanking His Excellency, he goes on to say: "At Warsaw everything is moving along smoothly, but here there has been no change in general conditions since I wrote to you three months ago. I cannot go forward with my plans, as no word has as yet arrived from the Prince. The Ordinary places no obstacle in my way; the Episcopal Council and Wessenberg have given me a free hand, and are doing all

[3] Hofbauer concludes this letter with the remark that there were still other matters of great import which he wished to communicate to the Nuncio, but that he did not venture to entrust them to the uncertainty of correspondence. From the rest of this letter one is inclined to gather that the Saint here intimates that he had been advised of Wessenberg's real attitude toward matters ecclesiastical, and the real motives which actuated him. From the same source it seems evident that the ex-Jesuit Anthony von Vicari was the one who had put the Saint on his guard against Wessenberg. As Pastor and Canon at St. John's Church, in Constance, he held strictly ecclesiastical views, and on this account was known to stand in strained relations with Wessenberg. Hofbauer heartily recommends him to the Nuncio, describing him as "a truly apostolic man" deserving of all recognition because of his literary labors in behalf of the Church. Hofbauer requests the Nuncio to write to him and encourage him in his zealous efforts to further the cause of religion, "for," he adds, "although he is a very mortified man, he is still human and will be grateful for such recognition." The Nuncio at Vienna immediately complied with Hofbauer's wish. — A nephew of Anthony von Vicari, Herman von Vicari, who was born in 1773, was at this time on the staff of the Episcopal Government College of Constance. In 1842 he became Archbishop of Freiburg, and continued in that office until 1868. He enjoyed as little favor with Wessenberg as his uncle, who did much to shape his views and sentiments along strictly orthodox lines. As Hofbauer was on intimate terms with Anthony von Vicari at Constance, we may safely assume that he was intimate likewise with Herman von Vicari, the future champion of the Church in Germany.

in their power to assist me. As time passes, the people are thronging more and more to hear the sermons, some of them traveling for two or three hours, especially on Sundays and holydays, in order to attend the devotions. As there are but two of us here, Father Huebl and I, I fear very much that we shall soon be quite unable to handle the situation. But what is to be done? I cannot take any of my brethren from Poland, for they themselves are overburdened with work and are clamoring for help; and I dare not accept any candidates until I have been definitely informed of the Prince's intentions. In the meantime, we two shall work as long as our strength endures, and if any candidates present themselves, I shall try to accommodate them as well as I can."

What hampered him more than anything else was the selfishness of the officials, who were intent only on procuring an inexpensive education for their sons, without caring very much about the greater needs of the Church. "But," as Hofbauer writes, "there can be no thought of our conducting any sort of school or college until we have added to the number of our laborers. The Director, very probably, is simply letting the whole matter hang fire. This means, of course, that we shall have to possess our souls in patience, until God in His own good time points out to us by circumstances what is to be done."

And circumstances did very shortly so shape themselves that it seemed as if the Saint's patience was soon to be rewarded. Prospects of acquiring a suitable house for the novitiate grew brighter, when a delegation of citizens from Triberg, in the Black Forest, arrived at Mt. Thabor, to request the services of some of the Fathers. Near their city there was a shrine of the Blessed Virgin possessing a miraculous picture of the Mother of God. During the summer months great numbers of pilgrims from Germany, France, and Switzerland had formerly flocked to Triberg, but latterly the shrine had lost much of its popularity. The priests in charge of it were not only too few for the needs of the pilgrims, but their conduct was such as to repel rather than attract the pious faithful. To revive the interest of the people and restore the place to its former

popularity, this shrine was now offered to the Fathers of the Congregation.

In June or July following, Hofbauer, in company with Huebl, went to Triberg to inspect the place. He found the place suitable beyond expectations for his purpose. The large house could comfortably accommodate about thirty-five persons, and enjoyed a sufficiently good income. The locality he described to the Nuncio as simply charming. Situated between mountains and rocks and dense forests, — in winter perfectly solitary, and in summer frequented by large pilgrimages, — here, he remarked, one could think of giving a "Perpetual Mission." The new foundation, moreover, would serve as a nursery for both Triberg and Jestetten. He declared himself ready to take over the church and the house within the next eighteen months, or about the beginning of 1805, provided the consent of the new Governor, the Archduke Ferdinand of Modena, were obtained. In this instance, likewise, he encountered sad experiences on account of the tardiness of the officials in giving their consent. One of them, to whom Hofbauer and Huebl presented themselves, manifested great delight at their coming, complained of the scandalous lives of the priests in charge of the place of pilgrimage, and promised to do all in his power to procure the place for them; behind their backs, however, he declared that he would leave nothing undone to prevent the Redemptorists from establishing themselves there. Hofbauer resolved to negotiate directly with the Archduke. The citizens of Triberg also sent a petition to their Governor, who resided in Vienna.

In the meantime several candidates had arrived at Mt. Thabor, among them the Reverend Joseph Hofbauer, a priest from Lorraine, who was about the same age as the Vicar-General. On July 21, the latter reported to the Nuncio that his community now consisted of nine persons, and that he expected it to be increased to thirteen or fifteen in the next few weeks. But the very next day four new members were added to the religious family at Mt. Thabor by the arrival of Father Passerat and the three clerics, Sabelli, Casimir Langanki, and Francis Hofbauer, a nephew of the Saint. As these clerics were "foreigners," they were not allowed to be ordained at

Warsaw. The Vicar-General was planning to go to Naples in the fall in order to visit the Father General, and he decided to take his candidates for ordination with him and have them ordained in Italy. For this reason he had summoned them to Mt. Thabor. Father Passerat had come to fulfil his office of Novice-Master.

Before going to Italy, however, Hofbauer and Passerat undertook a longer journey to France, where Napoleon then held the reins of power as First Consul. The journey was undertaken primarily to give Passerat an opportunity of seeing his aged mother. Clad in white working-blouses, they proceeded as far as Joinville, in the Champagne, where Passerat's mother was still living at the old homestead. There and along the line of route they studied the religious conditions of the country and the prospects of a foundation in France. This, it seems, they were urged to do at the instance of the Duchess of Angoulême, the daughter of Louis XVI, who at that time was making her home with Louis XVIII in Courland. It was there that she had become acquainted with the Fathers of St. Benno's. Hofbauer and Passerat, however, returned from Joinville with the conviction that the time was not yet ripe for a foundation on French soil.

Hofbauer now prepared for his journey to Rome. He left Mt. Thabor on August 24, in company with Father Huebl and the three clerics. Passerat and Father Joseph Hofbauer remained at home with the students. The journey, of which only a meager account is extant, was made through Milan to Spello in the States of the Church. Leaving the clerics at the college there to prepare themselves during several weeks for ordination, Hofbauer and Huebl proceeded on their way to Rome, where they arrived toward the end of September. Neither had seen the Eternal City since 1785. There they entered into conference with Father Giattini, the Father General's representative at Rome, and with him discussed many matters touching the well-being of the Transalpine houses. On October 3, the Saint was received in audience by the reigning Pontiff, Pope Pius VII. "It was evident," wrote Cardinal Litta to Severoli, "that the Holy Father listened to him with great interest and undisguised pleasure." From the

lips of Christ's Vicar himself, Hofbauer secured the approbation of the Congregation of Oblates, and a number of other privileges. As a remembrance of his visit, the Holy Father presented him with a rosary, which he thereafter ever preserved as a sacred relic.

In the meantime developments at Warsaw demanded his presence there, so that he was obliged to cancel his intended visit to Naples. Sending his regrets to the Father General, he promised to see him at Pagani during the summer of 1804, or in the spring of the following year. Till then, he declared, the Superior General might look for more frequent news from his Transalpine subjects, as the transmission of letters from Southern Germany was far easier than from distant Poland. Hofbauer, however, never returned to Italy. In the designs of God he was not destined to see Father Blasucci in this world. This was his last journey to Rome.

About the middle of October, we again find Hofbauer and Huebl at Spello, whither they had returned to assist at the ordination of the three clerics. They were obliged to tarry here for a week, until the feast of St. Raphael, October 24, the date which the Bishop of Foligno had set for the ceremony. After dinner on that same day, they set out on their homeward journey to Jestetten. They stopped at Luzerne to pay their respects to the Nuncio Testaferratta. Thence they went directly to Mt. Thabor, where they found matters running smoothly under Passerat's direction.

During the days of rest that followed, the questions regarding the convent property of the Nuns were at last brought to a settlement. Wessenberg sent Hofbauer a letter acknowledging and commending the service he had rendered the diocese: "There can be no doubt whatever," he wrote, "but that He who is the Lord of the Harvest will most generously bless the disinterested zeal with which you and your companions are endeavoring to further the cause of religion. Be pleased to accept my heartfelt good wishes for a safe journey to Warsaw." After a rest of seven days, Hofbauer and Huebl continued their journey to Vienna.

From Vienna the Saint wrote, on December 3, to Father Giattini, with whom he now regularly exchanged letters: "We

are happy and in good health, and expect soon to go on to Warsaw." Contrary to his expectations, however, he had to prolong his stay in Vienna, for he was determined not to set out for Poland until he had received definite information from the Archduke Ferdinand regarding the foundation at Triberg.

Unfortunately, the petition of the citizens of Triberg, requesting that the place of pilgrimage be given in charge to the Redemptorists, was submitted for approval to Wessenberg by the Government of Breisgau. Wessenberg advised against such action, declaring that while " this Congregation is indeed made up of members in every way worthy, the care of a place of pilgrimage is hardly in accord with the real end of their Institute, etc." This, however, was the merest pretext to shield himself; he did not dare assign the real motive, which was none other than his avowed disapproval of every sort of pilgrimage. The patronizing and maintenance of pilgrim-shrines had no place in his program of ecclesiastical reform. It is scarcely necessary to add that the Government of Breisgau was glad to follow Wessenberg's advice.

Before this decision was reached, Hofbauer was notified in Vienna that the Archduke had consented, provisionally, to transfer the care of the shrine at Triberg to the Redemptorists. On December 10, he presented a Memorial to His Highness through the mediation of Prince Albani, who looked with favor on the proposition. Six days later he again ventured to solicit the support of the Nuncio at Vienna; but he did so by letter, although he himself was in Vienna at the time, for he feared becoming a burden to His Excellency by his frequent personal visits. He wrote: " I declare before God and before Your Excellency, that neither I nor my companions dread any hardships or difficulties that we may encounter in laboring for the honor and glory of God, the exaltation of Holy Church, and the salvation of souls. But I must have a place where I can gather laborers and train them for the work I am expected to do. I desire most ardently to sacrifice myself and to give myself unreservedly to Our Saviour Jesus Christ and to the souls redeemed by His infinitely Precious Blood; for I see that the moral condition of the Christian people is constantly growing worse, because, on the one hand, the number of

shepherds is daily diminishing, while, on the other, many of the shepherds themselves are become hirelings and destroyers of the flock of Christ. I am not seeking my own interests, for if I were, should I not have remained at Warsaw where, surrounded by my brethren, I could quietly watch over their labors and rejoice at their success? There, at least, I should not be obliged to wear myself out and imperil my health by submitting to hunger and fatigue and all sorts of cares and troubles, and in my advanced age undertaking long and difficult journeys and exposing myself to the inclemency of the weather. But far be it from me to seek my own ease and comfort! I repeat: I have at heart only the honor and glory of God, the welfare of the Church, and the salvation of immortal souls now threatened with so many dangers. In the meantime I am constantly imploring the King of Heaven to enlighten the minds and direct the hearts of those whom He has placed in authority on earth. At the same time I beg, and I shall not cease to beg Your Excellency to use your influence with the Archduke in our behalf, and to point out to him the advantages that by God's grace are sure to accrue to the State, if he entrusts the house at Triberg to a Congregation whose members are ready to sacrifice themselves unreservedly to the cause of religion and desire nothing more ardently than to win the whole world back to Christ. I have studied the conditions, and I know the needs of Upper Germany, and for this reason I do not hesitate to assert that, if His Highness grants our petition, Triberg will be the home of a great band of missionaries before the end of the next four years. Thence they will go forth, like conquering cohorts, to battle with the forces of evil, and rescue the fair Bride of Christ from the attacks of her enemies in every part of the world."

The Archduke, probably not yet apprised of Greifenegg's and Wessenberg's opposition to the whole project, had in the interim given his provisional consent. Thus encouraged, the Saint was able to proceed on his way to Warsaw with a lighter heart.

The journey, begun in the depth of winter — January, 1804, proved a great hardship on account of the inclemency of the weather. They reached St. Benno's toward the end of the

month to find a new sorrow awaiting them. Father Mercier, then in his thirty-third year, lay at the point of death. A few days later he passed away. During the seven months of an extremely painful illness, which made it necessary for him to undergo several major operations, the young religious had given his confrères an example of the most heroic patience.

The Vicar-General was not able to return to Germany as soon as he desired. He was no longer the rugged religious who a decade ago had set on foot the great religious movement in Warsaw, and he had now to pay the price of the tremendous demands which had been made on his physical strength during the previous fourteen months. The long journeys from Warsaw to Vienna, to Jestetten, to the north of France, and to Italy, and thence back again to Jestetten and Vienna and Warsaw, and the interval of labor and privation and disappointment at Mt. Thabor, brought on a sudden and severe reaction. Huebl became the Saint's companion in illness, as he had been in his wanderings: both were now confined to bed for months at St. Benno's. The immediate cause of their illness was probably a severe cold, contracted as they pushed their wintry way from Vienna to Warsaw.

The Saint had scarcely recovered, however, when he grew impatient to leave Warsaw. Disturbing reports had come from Jestetten: the new foundation, it seems, faced a financial crisis. He accordingly left Warsaw just before the end of August, accompanied only by Aloysius Cech, a student of the city, who had applied for admission into the Congregation. Years afterward Father Cech, as an aged Redemptorist, wrote the following in his reminiscences of Hofbauer: " He sanctified the journey by incessant prayer and constant communing with God. Important business matters obliged him to remain for two days at Dresden as the guest of the royal family and of the King's Confessor. He also spent three days at Augsburg and Constance. On September 21, we at last arrived safely among our brethren at Mt. Thabor, forgetting in the joy of our welcome all the hardships that we had endured." Hofbauer, so far as is known, now remained at Jestetten until well into the spring of 1806.

It was not an exaggerated account of Jestetten's problems

that had caused the Saint to fly to the rescue. Conditions at Mt. Thabor were really alarming in the extreme. The Government-building could not be obtained, and the community was growing more and more numerous. On Hofbauer's return it counted six Fathers, four Brothers, nine novices, and several students. Every nook and corner was occupied. The clerics slept in the garret of the church, the students in a tower standing apart, without doors or windows, and having no way of access except by means of a ladder. The dwelling, like everything else, was poor and wretched; at best it was a sorry excuse for a home. "But all this," again writes Father Cech, "was powerless to destroy the incorrigible optimism of the Saint. He shared the privations of the community; his example was an incentive to all, and his words of encouragement made us forget our sufferings, while we counted ourselves fortunate to live under the guidance of so vigilant and saintly a superior. He was always very busy in the confessional, he preached every Sunday and holyday, and he carried on an extensive correspondence in reference to matters pertaining to the Congregation. What time remained he was wont to spend in prayer." In later years Hofbauer related how during these months he and his confrères went out, each with a hoe on his shoulder, to work in the open fields.

The letters he wrote at this period attest the fact that in spite of adverse conditions, the best spirit reigned in the community. The religious family was made up for the most part of youthful members, and something of the irrepressible enthusiasm of recently established Orders still in the first fervor of sacrifice and rejoicing in self-denial, was in the spiritual atmosphere at Mt. Thabor. Writing to Father Giattini at the dawn of the New Year, the Vicar-General begs for a minute account of Liguori's life in Latin, so that his clerics and students, who could not understand Italian, might the better acquaint themselves with the story of the saintly Founder. On another occasion he asks for particulars about deceased Redemptorists and Redemptoristines. These matters, he felt, would prove of great interest to his clerics; for, he says, "our young aspirants are true Redemptorists themselves, and they are constantly requesting us to tell them something about our

venerated Father and our confrères in Italy." He himself was a bright example of brotherly charity and of childlike attachment to the Congregation. Although sorely in need of money himself, he cheerfully sent of his scant savings to Italy, and was especially glad to help defray the expenses incidental to the Process of Liguori's Beatification. To see his venerable Founder raised to the honors of the Church's altars was the great desire of his heart, and in his conversations he invariably reverted to it. Many of his letters to Italy consist of nothing else than requests for the writings, the portraits, and the biographies of Liguori.

Hofbauer had planned a visit to St. Benno's in the beginning of February, 1805; but he was obliged to cancel this journey, because at that time the prospects of establishing the foundation at Triberg seemed unusually favorable. But he tarried and waited in vain for several months, as the question of the new house remained an unsettled issue, chiefly on account of Wessenberg's opposition. Shortly after the New Year of 1805, however, Hofbauer must have learned that the matter was to be decided in his favor. This we glean from a letter which he sent to Italy, on April 17, in which he informs Father Giattini that it would be necessary to have the two Suabians, Anthony Egle and Hartmann, ordained by the Nuncio at Luzerne as soon as possible. These two clerics had not yet reached the canonical age required by the Sacred Canons for candidates to the priesthood, and Hofbauer requests Giattini to procure and forward the necessary dispensations without further delay. "These dispensations," he writes, "must be here in the beginning of May. We are wofully in need of priests for a new foundation. Were we as free to act here as you are in Italy, we should have a whole army of Redemptorists both in Poland and in Germany." On the same day that Hofbauer wrote these lines, Archduke Ferdinand signed the papers provisionally permitting three Redemptorists to take care of the pilgrimage at Triberg for the next six months, and holding out to them the prospect of a permanent charge. Wessenberg had in the meantime trumped up another serious reason for not bestowing upon the Religious the two benefices destined for the support of the secular clergy: it would be unfair and

uncanonical to take this source of revenue from the priests of the diocese and turn it over to the Redemptorists. The Archduke, however, overruled the objection by assigning the three Fathers a salary out of his own treasury. Wessenberg now submitted, and granted the necessary faculties to the three Fathers appointed by Hofbauer for Triberg, Fathers Langanki, Biedrzycki, and Francis Hofbauer. Dr. Hoehn, the Director of the place of pilgrimage, offered a strenuous protest, and at the last moment endeavored to annul the whole proceeding by appealing to " the spirit of the times." Indignantly he wrote to Wessenberg: " Do you actually intend at one fell swoop to restore the old order of things, and do you really believe that the good cause will be furthered more easily by Religious, by the preaching of indulgences, by the revival of miraculous occurrences, and such like things as the people shall expect from these strange Religious? If this is your purpose, and if you wish thus to indulge the superstition of the masses, then, so far as I am concerned, this Order may build a whole college here." Wessenberg temporized as usual, and tried to pacify the Director by reminding him that the incumbency of the Redemptorists was not a permanent assignment, but would last for only six months.

The Redemptorists took possession at Triberg shortly before the end of May. Hofbauer personally led the little band of four Fathers and several students. The latter were to continue their studies in the more spacious house at Triberg, thus relieving the congested conditions at Mt. Thabor. Among these students was Aloysius Cech, who has left us the following: " The journey was made on foot in a downpour of rain. We were drenched to the skin, and when night came we were still three or four hours' journey from Triberg, with no inn in sight. We therefore stopped at the first farmhouse we met. Father Hofbauer had the good people prepare a good soup for supper, and put straw on the floor of the barn to serve as our beds. There we slept during that night, and next morning, when we reached for our clothes, we found them as wet as they had been when we took them off. We put them on again just as they were; for the example of the Saint stifled in us every inclination to murmur against our lot. The reception given us

on our arrival at Triberg was as touching as it was cordial. Joy and gladness beamed from every countenance, and the whole population accompanied the Fathers to the church of the pilgrimage." The Feast of Pentecost was at hand, and " as the date set for the arrival of the missionaries had been noised abroad, thousands of pilgrims appeared on the scene. The Saint was the first to ascend the pulpit, and his sermon made a deep impression upon all. Many that had promised to make a pilgrimage to Einsiedeln, asked to be dispensed from this promise, so that they might make the pilgrimage to Triberg instead."

What was of more importance to the Saint than all this enthusiasm of the people, was the fact that he now possessed a more spacious house for the novitiate. He had at last reached the goal he had so long been seeking. At least so it appeared. Bright plans for the future filled his mind as he established his brethren at the pilgrim-shrine of Triberg, and throngs upon throngs of pilgrims continued to arrive during the solemn days of Pentecost. He promised the people to introduce there, as time went on, divine services that should be second to none in all Germany.

But Divine Providence had decreed otherwise. The last of the many obstacles that beset the Saint in the pursuit of his life-work was yet a long way off. Indeed, some of the saddest and most soul-harrowing disappointments were still awaiting him. His little community had scarcely left Mt. Thabor and settled at Triberg, when a great storm arose and wreaked its fury on both these foundations that were so dear to the Saint's heart.

CHAPTER II

IN THE CONFLICT WITH WESSENBERG — COLLAPSE OF THE TWO FOUNDATIONS IN THE DIOCESE OF CONSTANCE (1805) — DIFFICULTIES AT WARSAW

IN addition to Dr. Hoehn, the Director of the Triberg Pilgrimage, there were others among the local clergy that looked askance upon the work of the new arrivals. Among those that shared his sentiments were the pastor of the city and a number of the clergy in the immediate vicinity. The most dangerous opponent of the Redemptorist community, however, was the Spiritual Counselor, Dr. Haeberlin, Episcopal Commissary at Freiburg, who later won for himself the unenviable distinction of becoming one of the destroyers of the Church in Baden. The reforms which he advocated and defended by word and by pen, alone suffice to indicate the character of this unworthy priest. He supported movements for the abolition of celibacy among the clergy, of seminaries, of convents, and of the indissolubility of the marriage bond.

Haeberlin was the immediate ecclesiastical superior of the Fathers at Triberg. In taking over this new foundation, therefore, they had set foot into the very den of the lion. Indeed, within two weeks after their arrival there, Haeberlin let loose his fury against them. On June 15, he wrote to Wessenberg: " In my room yesterday Dr. Hoehn told me such things as must fire the blood of every decent man and fill even the most phlegmatic with indignation. What a contrast between the principles *in austriaco* (*i.e.*, those that obtain in Austria), and the ordinances that have issued from the bishop and the ruler of this country! ! One need only consider the absurd, nonsensical methods by which these monks endeavor to attract the people, to discover of what spirit they are, and what sort of Christianity they will impart to the people, especially in the confessional. My love for the welfare of religion and my interest in the safety of the State make me hope that these

clergymen will be given no fixed and permanent abode in our country; otherwise it will be impossible for any well-meaning clergyman who insists on the essentials of religion to remain at his post in Triberg or its environs."

Wessenberg's letters to Haeberlin and Hoehn betray a secret resentment against the Redemptorists. When we consider that he had reprimanded the pastor of Jestetten for making similar complaints a year previously, we must look elsewhere for the cause of Wessenberg's change of sentiment. He was an extremely sensitive man, and he felt himself slighted in the first instance, because the Fathers were called to Triberg against his will and advice. He broke completely with Hofbauer, however, when he learned that the latter had several clerics ordained by the Nuncio in Luzerne. This, of course, was a departure from the usual course of procedure, but Hofbauer's action was justified by a special privilege he had received from the Holy See. But the Papal Nunciatures were regarded by the champions of the national church as very awkward nuisances. The Swiss Nuncio, Testaferrata, was looked upon as Wessenberg's most formidable adversary, and was held responsible for the uncompromising attitude of the Roman Curia in its severe action against Wessenberg. Without further ado, the latter now deprived Father Hartmann, who had been ordained in Luzerne, of all jurisdiction in the diocese. Not content with this, he demanded to know by what authority Hofbauer had introduced additional devotions at Triberg, and why he was so passionately fond of exemptions and privileges.

The Saint, in his reply, made no remonstrance, but merely apologized for the ordinations that had taken place at Luzerne. The accusation of having augmented the services by unusual or unapproved devotions he simply denied. He wrote: "We taught the people to sing hymns from the Viennese Hymnbook. No sermons have been preached except on the days prescribed, or without the approbation of the Reverend Director. Occasionally I went among the people in the church and explained to them the proper manner of making their confession. If there is any cause for complaint, it is we that should complain. But I naturally dislike bringing an accusation

against any one. Experience has taught me that it is usually better to tolerate what one cannot approve, for I do not forget that I too am human and have my faults, as others have theirs. Nevertheless, what I have thus far refrained from doing, I may yet do. I always endeavor to have compassion on my fellow-man when he commits a fault, even as I also wish others to be patient with me and overlook my faults."

His plea for a restoration of the old friendly relations with Wessenberg was in vain; the favor of the powerful man had been lost forever. Wessenberg now had no thought for these Romans except to effect their dismissal from the diocese as soon as possible; and when no means of gracefully getting rid of them presented itself, he finally took matters into his own hands and forced the issue. Quite unexpectedly, the three Fathers at Triberg were ordered to submit to an examination in Theology in the presence of Dr. Haeberlin. "This examination," Haeberlin wrote, "may offer the best opportunity of getting rid of these priests;" and in fact, when it took place at Freiburg early in September, it had the desired result. Haeberlin found, as he wrote to Wessenberg, that these Fathers were not really "the bigots they were reputed to be," and that they evinced a lack of knowledge and proper instruction rather than of talent. Thus he declared that they were not sufficiently trained and informed to fit them for preaching and for the hearing of confessions, and that consequently it would have been far better had these Poles never been permitted to go to Triberg.

Wessenberg impatiently awaited the last day of October, for in his eagerness to eject the missionaries he included the entire month of May in the six months' trial that had been granted them, although they had arrived at Triberg only on May 30.

In the meantime, the Archduke Ferdinand had also been reminded that the six months were drawing to a close, but for a reason far less sinister. Dr. Huber, the Upper Bailiff of Triberg, and Greifenegg, the President of the District, who sent this information to the Archduke, shared the kindly sentiments of the people in the matter, as well as their reverence for the missionaries. The ruler was so well pleased with the report

of the good work accomplished by the Fathers, that by a decree, dated September 12, he extended their stay at Triberg for two years, and "as a mark of his complete satisfaction" presented them with an additional sum of money for the proper ordering and furnishing of their house.

Greifenegg hereupon asked Wessenberg for an extension of faculties for the Fathers. On September 26, the Vicar-General of Constance sent a letter containing his unqualified refusal, and took occasion to state very minutely all his complaints against the Fathers. The outstanding unpardonable act committed by Hofbauer was, according to Wessenberg, the ordination of the clerics at Luzerne. "By this act," the letter declares, "so clearly at variance with the intrinsic form of the Church's government, and so little in accord with the statutes of the General Councils, he has made himself deserving of the punishment usually meted out to recalcitrant clerics. Consequently, the Bishop can no longer tolerate him or his associate members of the Congregation in this diocese." On that very day, he withdrew all jurisdiction from one of the three Fathers at Triberg — Father Biedrzycki, who had been ordained at Luzerne, — and further instructed Dr. Hoehn that after the last day of October the other two priests were to be summarily prohibited from conducting divine services in the church.

The Community at Mt. Thabor was equally unable to escape the severe wrath of Wessenberg. He refused to grant jurisdiction to the Fathers who subsequently arrived there; Egle and Hartmann, who had been ordained in Luzerne, he suspended; the school, which had been opened in 1805, he ordered closed in September of the same year. The Schwarzenberg Government, hitherto so favorably inclined to the Fathers, likewise changed its attitude. Various disputes had arisen as a result of the inspection of the school and the reception of novices. The Schwarzenberg Bailiff of Jestetten, a man named Teufel, carried his opposition so far as to instigate a real persecution against the Community at Mt. Thabor, and its members were regarded as so great a menace that even the Government officials in Vienna and Warsaw were warned to keep a watchful eye on the Redemptorists.

In so far as all external work in the ministry was concerned,

therefore, the Fathers at Mt. Thabor were thus condemned to complete inactivity. According to a catalogue containing the names of the members of the Congregation at that time, the Community attached to Mt. Thabor in June, 1805, consisted of seven Fathers, two clerics, five choir-novices, and two lay-brothers. The candidates still pursuing their collegiate studies were at Triberg.

Father Passerat, who was Rector and Novice-Master at Mt. Thabor, was a real support and inspiration to his subjects during these trying days. His example alone sufficed to strengthen them in their vocation, and made them steadfast in the path of duty, suddenly become so rugged and uninviting. One day during this summer his aged mother came to visit him. Since his visit to her the previous year, the poor, lonely woman had done all in her power to persuade him to return to France. She had requested, and succeeded in obtaining, from the Papal Legate in France, Cardinal Caprara, a decree of secularization for Passerat, and this she brought with her to Jestetten as an added inducement for her son. But all the tearful entreaties of the devoted mother failed to move Passerat in the least. The saintly priest quietly read the decree of secularization, and as silently tore it up.

Thus did this Novice-Master himself practise what he constantly preached to his novices: "Even if you should have an apparition of the Saviour, and Jesus Christ Himself should say to you, 'You have no vocation,' you must not leave and return to the world, because it would not be He."

After the opening of the house at Triberg, Father Hofbauer seems to have resided alternately at Jestetten and at Triberg. But as soon as he noticed the change in Wessenberg's attitude, he no longer entertained any doubt that his work in the diocese of Constance was at an end. He hastened therefore to find a new place of refuge for his sorely-tried community. There was no longer a great variety from which to choose. The Diocese of Constance, in which they were now unwelcome, alone comprised a considerable portion of Southwest Germany and of German Switzerland. He had already been refused admission into the Diocese of Freiburg. The Austrian Dioceses held out still less hope to him. Consequently, only the extensive

Diocese of Augsburg in Southern Germany was now open to him. Suabia, a great portion of which belonged to this diocese, had formerly occupied no mean place in his plans. He now reverted to it as to a land of promise. Ecclesiastical conditions there were assuredly more favorable, as is evident from the fact that the Director of the Diocese, Vicar-General Nigg, was a personal friend of Hofbauer's, and in character and temperament the very counterpart of Wessenberg. Of him Father Hofbauer wrote to Father Blasucci: "He is a most estimable man, who, devoted to the Holy See, governs this extensive diocese with admirable tact and success, in spite of the adverse conditions under which we are living." The chief problem now before the Saint was, therefore, to find a district where the civil authorities were not opposed to the religious life of the convent.

If we may judge from the meager accounts of this period that have come down to us, Hofbauer, with only Father Sabelli as his companion, spent most of the summer of 1805 in the district of Augsburg. There are no particulars extant concerning the place of his sojourn or the extent of his activities. Even at Jestetten, Triberg, and Warsaw his address was not known for several weeks. We do know, however, that the people of Suabia, whom he could now observe at close range, captivated him. The people here, he remarked of a certain section of Suabia, are like wax — one can mould them and do with them as one chooses. "I did not doubt that I should find such staunch Catholicity in the district of Augsburg: it is assuredly the staunchest in all Germany. Here innocence still finds an asylum and religion a home." The consideration of the dangers that threatened this good Catholic people, however, was for this very reason all the more distressing and alarming. It is hard to say which of the two he found the more soul-harrowing — the religious fanaticism that was rapidly gaining ground even in the diocese of Augsburg, or the ecclesiastical disturbances consequent alike upon a policy of secularization pursued by the civil authorities and upon irregularities rife among the clergy. Certain it is, that he was appalled by the religious outlook in the land, for Father Huebl wrote from Warsaw to the Father General: "Father Hofbauer is terribly

distressed at seeing so great a diocese with three thousand parishes being ruined." The dejection that took hold on and crushed his spirit during these weeks, affected him physically as well, and, added to the bodily hardship which no doubt he had to undergo, once again laid him low upon a bed of sickness, as he had been laid low at Warsaw the previous summer. We do not know where he was when his reserve force finally gave out and compelled him to take to his bed; nor do we know aught of the nature or cause of his illness. His condition, however, must have been quite serious, as it led Father Huebl to write to Pagani, asking for instructions to be followed in case of the Vicar-General's death. But the valiant soldier of Christ had not yet fought his last battle; his robust constitution was once again superior to the severe demands made upon it, and he recovered.

His struggles for a new foundation were also crowned with success at last. Toward the end of August, we find him negotiating with Prince Anselm Mary Fugger, who resided at Babenhausen on the Guenz, south of Ulm, and possessed a small Principality subject only to the Imperial Government. Hofbauer begged him for a foundation in Babenhausen, holding out the prospect of a small college as an inducement. Baron Beroldingen, who had figured here before, earnestly supported the Saint's request. The words that he addressed to Fugger seem to-day to have been prophetic. "The protection of this Congregation," he wrote, "appears to me to be absolutely necessary in order to preserve Catholic Christendom, which is suffering so grievously in this ungodly, frivolous age, at least until a happy combination of great events will have offered the opportunity of restoring and even improving the old order of things. Fortunate indeed is that ruler who is placed in a position to follow his kindly impulses and become an instrument for the accomplishment of so salutary a work — and thrice blessed he, if he can but hope to be the prime mover of a Christian enterprise so far-reaching in its benign results, even though it should not see fulfilment until a hundred years hence! I regard the establishment of such an institute as the Redemptorists have in mind as a rich deposit, in which the stricter Christian morality, so universally hated nowadays,

may lie hidden from the public gaze until such time as it can be brought forth again without fear and without restraint." This appeal had its desired effect: the Prince without further ado rented a building in Babenhausen and placed it at Hofbauer's disposal.

In the beginning of October, we find the Saint at Augsburg, whither he had gone to obtain the Bishop's permission for the foundation. Here the atmosphere was charged with the din and turmoil of the Napoleonic War. During the summer, Emperor Francis II joined the Russo-British League against the French. On September 8, the Austrians under the leadership of Mack entered Bavaria, while the Southern German rulers cast their lot with Napoleon. From his vantage-point at Augsburg, Hofbauer was able to witness the utter destruction of the Austrian army by Napoleon.

The mission that had brought the Saint to Augsburg was concluded only toward the end of October. Thereupon he withdrew all his brethren from Mt. Thabor and buried forever all the fond hopes he had once set upon that foundation, though he would gladly have retained the place on account of its desirable situation near the borders of Switzerland and France.

On October 25, Father Passerat left Mt. Thabor with his Community, which consisted of more than twenty persons. The long journey to Babenhausen was made entirely on foot. Each one carried a bundle containing his few belongings — Passerat usually plodding along alone behind the others, in order to devote himself without interruption to prayer. At night, on reaching the inn, his first care was to remove the mattress from the bed, so as to comply with the prescription of the Rule, which requires the members to sleep on straw. The order of the day observed in the convent was as conscientiously followed on their journey. Every morning at four o'clock the Rector's deep bass voice rang out with the words, *Benedicamus Domino!* — the signal for rising. The morning meditation was never omitted. Even on the journey Father Passerat remained faithful to his custom of taking the discipline twice a day. " In spite of this severity against himself," remarks one who was a subject of his at the time, " he was never morose

or sullen. We never noticed the slightest sign of discouragement or agitation in him. He was always calm, always cheerful, and he kept all his troubles to himself."

It was nearing All Saints' Day when they arrived at Babenhausen. About the same time Fathers Casimir Langanki and Francis Hofbauer were compelled to discontinue their labors at the church of the Triberg pilgrimage. Greifenegg had done his utmost to bring Wessenberg to his senses, but his efforts had proved futile. During the previous century, Triberg, as a place of pilgrimage, had fallen more and more in the estimation of the people, owing to the dissensions among the Pententiaries of the secular clergy, their evident unfitness, and their reprehensible and unbecoming conduct. The President of the Government, in no uncertain terms, emphasized the necessity and importance of restoring the once famous shrine to its erstwhile favor, declaring that " only Religious, who are trained to obedience and respect for authority, could labor successfully at the place of pilgrimage." Wessenberg, however, was immovable, and constantly protested that he could easily supply capable secular priests for the pilgrims. The proof that he offered for his contention was a sorry one indeed. The post was actually in bad repute, and he found himself unable to procure the capable help he had promised. At length he sent to Triberg two priests to whom both the people and the civil authorities at once offered strenuous objections. The one was a grey-haired old man, formerly a printer by trade, who had been married and had three poor grown-up daughters. The other was an ex-Cistercian, twenty-four years of age, now a jolly musician who spent his time lounging around in the taverns. Wessenberg was obliged to compel the latter to accept the post under threat of suspension. Even at the altar he scandalized the people by his conduct. Wessenberg, carried away by his prejudices, had for once lost his head completely. To Wessenberg, self-styled protagonist in the struggle for a moral and reputable clergy, any drunkard was better than a Roman. The end of October was fast approaching, and with it the Commemoration of All Departed Souls. Dr. Hoehn himself now earnestly begged Wessenberg to leave the two Fathers in possession of their jurisdiction at least over Sunday,

November 3, as on that day a great influx of pilgrims was expected and he had no other suitable confessors at hand. Wessenberg acceded to this request, but only for that day. On November 4, Dr. Hoehn, after informing the Fathers of their suspension from all further ecclesiastical functions, immediately fled in haste from Triberg out of fear of the people. Nor were his fears without foundation. The people, already wrought up to a high pitch by the news that war had just broken out, resented the treatment meted out to the Fathers, and became inflamed with anger. Indeed, the quarrel about the place of pilgrimage at Triberg assumed so serious an aspect during those troublous times, that the Upper Bailiff, Dr. Huber, feared a riot. The inhabitants of Triberg left no stone unturned to effect the removal from office of the hated Dr. Hoehn. They sent a complaint to the Government. What they said in this document about the Director of the pilgrimage and his chaplains, and the detailed description of the time, place, and other circumstances of the misdemeanors of which they accused the latter, were not, of course, very edifying reading. They even tried to prevail upon the Fathers to disregard the suspension; but this the Fathers naturally declined to do. An "executive deputation" was formed and was to wait upon Dr. Hoehn in the beginning of December for the purpose of forcing him to lift the suspension by his own authority. Advised betimes by the Upper Bailiff of what was afoot, the frightened Director passed the night in the Court House, and the following morning fled for refuge to the Abbey of Willingen. There he remained in concealment for a fortnight, and even then did not return to Triberg until he had been assured by Huber that the people's anger had subsided and all was well.

In the meantime, a formal passage at arms had developed between Wessenberg and Greifenegg. The latter dispatched note after note to Constance, demanding that the unjust decree of suspension be revoked. Wessenberg remained inflexible, always taking refuge in evasion. Thus the verbal encounter went on until the month of January, 1806. The two Fathers meanwhile continued to live quietly in their dwelling near the pilgrimage church. Wessenberg had, indeed, the power to

suspend them; but he could not compel them to leave the country. By quitting the country they could undoubtedly have put an end to the scandalous quarrel, but Dr. Huber, fearing that their departure would force the people to open violence, besought them to remain. He even procured from the Archduke an express command to continue at their post.

Moreover, the Fathers were hopeful that the storm would soon blow over. But they hoped in vain. Wessenberg was fully determined not to yield, and Greifenegg, whose language grew more and more threatening as the quarrel waxed hotter, was equally resolved not to surrender. During January, 1806, this quarrel, so insignificant in itself, came very near causing a clash between the two powers of Church and State, when Napoleon appeared on the scene and unexpectedly gave a new turn to matters by freeing Wessenberg from his unenviable position.

The war of 1805 ended after a brief struggle in the complete defeat of the Coalition. It had demanded two painful sacrifices from our Saint: his nephew, Aloysius Hofbauer, fell on the field of battle at Austerlitz, and his devoted friend Don Virginio succumbed at Vienna while ministering to the wounded soldiers.[1] On December 26, Austria had to accept the humiliating terms of the conqueror and sign the Peace of Pressburg. The German vassals of Napoleon were richly rewarded for their support. Besides being advanced in rank, they obtained an extension of territory. Wuerttemberg, among other spoils, received a portion of Breisgau. In January, 1806, the people at Triberg were being told that they were now subject to the King of Wuerttemberg. The final settlement of the frontiers, however, remained in abeyance for several months. It was not until the autumn that word was finally received that Triberg belonged to Baden.

Langanki and Francis Hofbauer remained at Triberg throughout the winter. At the close of the year, Dr. Hoehn, referring to the two Redemptorists, made the following entry in the Chronicles of the Pilgrimage: " During this entire year, except during the Paschal season, they never received the Sacraments. In spite of this fact their sanctity is praised to the skies

[1] He was buried at Maria-Enzersdorf.

by the inhabitants of Triberg."[2] They suffered no want, for the people kept them generously supplied with all things needful. Their chief occupation during this time consisted in teaching the students. In December, 1806, Wessenberg sent a petition to the new government, requesting the removal of the Fathers. But several months elapsed before he finally had the satisfaction of accomplishing what he had all along desired, as questions of far greater moment had first to be settled at Carlsruhe. Father Langanki did not leave Triberg till May 26, 1807. Father Francis Hofbauer had been called away some time before.

This curious foundation had lasted fully two years, but only during the first five months could any activity be displayed in the church. The remaining nineteen months the Fathers, being under suspension, lived in retirement, quietly awaiting the end of the controversy between Wessenberg and Greifenegg.

Hofbauer himself had labored only a short time at Triberg. His stay there lasted but a few weeks. It is all the more striking, then, that he survived so long in the memory of the people. Nearly fifty years later the Redemptorists gave a mission at Triberg, and the older people enthusiastically related to the missionaries many interesting facts about Father Hofbauer. They had never forgotten, and they now recalled, the words which he had spoken to them on taking leave of Triberg: "Triberg will be put to the test; but it will not lose the faith, because it is under the protection of the Mother of God."

The events which we have recorded as occurring in Southwest Germany reached in their effects even to Warsaw. The press of the "Illuminati," having had its attention directed to Hofbauer, sounded the alarm against his activities. According to the newspapers appearing in Munich, the spirit of this Order, which Hofbauer was now trying to introduce by establishing schools and colleges, was by no means above suspicion, and the Chief of Police at Warsaw was openly warned to keep a watchful eye on it. Such language was naturally hailed with delight by the adversaries of the Bennonites at Warsaw. While Hof-

[2] Dr. Hoehn was not aware that by virtue of a special privilege the Fathers were permitted to celebrate Holy Mass daily in their own home.

bauer was spending himself in vain efforts to secure a foothold in the diocese of Constance, the Community at Warsaw came into bitter conflict with the government at Warsaw, the enemies of the hated preachers of morality gradually gaining the upper hand.

Shortly before the departure of the Vicar-General for the Southwest of Germany, the Fathers at St. Benno's decided upon the purchase of a house, probably with a view to correcting in their own way the intolerable conditions at both schools for the poor. The petition for the legal permit to purchase the house was presented by Father Huebl, the Rector. It was flatly refused. The Bennonites, he was told, had from the very beginning been intent upon spreading and multiplying the activities of their Congregation farther than the ordinance of the authorities permitted; these attempts at expansion, it was explained, could no longer be tolerated, especially as the principles of the Congregation were very much in opposition to the efforts of the Government for the advancement of education and true religious training, — a fact which alone was sufficient reason for resisting every attempt on the part of the Order to ensure its future existence. This was no longer merely the language of an official pronouncement. It was an open declaration of war against the Congregation.

For more than twenty years Hofbauer had devoted himself, at the cost of great self-sacrifice, to the education and care of the neglected children of Warsaw; and now he was charged by the authorities with rendering fruitless the efforts of the government in behalf of education and true religious training. He was determined not to let such blame be put upon himself: this indictment should not go unchallenged. He therefore took up the gauntlet that had been flung down to him, although at this time he was suffering dire distress at Jestetten. A Memorial, minute as to detail, and dated January, 1805, was prepared for presentation to King Frederick William III. The document contains a rescript, recast in plain and untechnical language, of the adverse decision of the Government of Warsaw, which was enclosed for the King's inspection.[3]

[3] This Memorial was signed by Hofbauer, Huebl, Jestersheim, and four other Fathers, among whom was the Novice-Master, Father Vannelet, who significantly signed himself as *Praefectus Seminarii.*

This Memorial reads in part as follows: " It would be possible for us to accept this decision in silence and to ignore the serious accusation that accompanies it, if we felt in any way guilty of these charges which stop at mere generalities without stating any specific instance of our delinquency. . . . We know of no civil ordinances forbidding us to labor for the welfare of our Congregation; on the contrary, those formerly issued by the Polish Government, as also those that went forth from the defunct Russian régime, tended to grant every support to our evidently useful Institute. The principles by which we are governed are clearly set forth in the Constitutions and Statutes herewith enclosed. These principles are not narrow, but liberal; they tend to promote, rather than impede, the progress of education. And even if the methods we have employed in the training of youth do not accord in every particular with the method and form which this or that individual school-man or official of the State regarded as the best, it is still a question whether our former method of teaching is to be wholly condemned. The fact of the matter is, that we also have subscribed to and adopted what we found to be best in the newer methods. As for the rest, we flatter ourselves that Your Royal Majesty, upon whose sound and tolerant judgment we entirely rely, will wait to see the actual results of the various and widely divergent systems of education now in vogue, before deciding which is productive of the best fruits. In a century, in which doubt is entertained regarding the One true, saving Church, we, too, can not believe in only One School, which alone makes people learned.

" Concerning the administration's pronouncements upon the religious character of our work, we leave it to Your Royal Majesty to say whether any Protestant is in a position to form a correct and unbiased judgment of our religion or of our exercise of it. Were we ever to presume to judge our Protestant neighbors in similar fashion, we should indeed deserve to be charged with a spirit of intolerance. But the contrary is the case, as the peaceful and tolerant sentiments we have ever entertained amply attest. As additional proof we offer the fact that as, in the days of the Polish Government, children of other religious creeds were admitted into our schools for sci-

entific training, so also are all such children free to attend our schools at the present time. But since these charges have nevertheless been lodged against us, and we ourselves are become the victims of intolerance, we confidently submit the present administration's decision together with these charges to Your Royal Majesty, to be disposed of as you see fit. If after weighing these accusations it becomes evident that the open warfare that has been stirred up against us has no foundation other than the bias and prejudice of our foes, we assuredly owe it to ourselves and to the State, which we serve so unselfishly, to show what manner of services we are rendering to the nation and to our fellowmen. Furthermore, we feel justified in taking this course of action since we are put down as criminals for seeking to secure the permanence of our Institute by strengthening our present position and adding to our personnel, whereas in so doing we are merely following the natural law of self-preservation."

Here follows a detailed account of the good that has been accomplished at the various institutions connected with St. Benno's. The Memorial then continues: " It is hardly credible that a society of secular priests, whose members, from a desire to promote the glory of God and from a sense of duty to mankind, renounce all the comforts of life and devote themselves to the achievement of so patriotic a purpose, could be so completely ignored and so harshly treated, when not a single definite and specific instance of their delinquency can be cited to prove them deserving of such abusive treatment. In our desire to be of service to the young, and especially to the poor, we live most frugally and we shun no labor. Parents who reside in the most outlying districts of the city, realize the good results of our manner of training the youth of both sexes, and have placed the stamp of their approval upon our system of education by sending their children gladly and regularly to our schools. We make no distinction between the children we support and instruct, be they of civilian or of military rank. A child that comes to us needs no other recommendation than the fact that it is poor or is an orphan."

Hereupon the Memorial explains, that if the schools at St. Benno's have not been up to the mark in efficiency, it is owing

solely to a constant lack of the necessary means of existence and the utter impossibility, under the present restrictions of the civil administration, of training competent teachers. Hofbauer, therefore, takes occasion here to renew his petition for a dispensation from the law fixing the age-limit at which candidates might be admitted to the novitiate.

Supplied with recommendations from prominent persons in the city, Jestersheim journeyed to Berlin during February, 1805, and personally presented the Memorial to the King. He was received and treated with all possible respect by the Ministers at Berlin. The high-handed manner in which the Council at Warsaw had proceeded against the Fathers, aroused the indignation of the King. Inasmuch as these proceedings of the previous November 19 contained a virtual declaration of war against the Institute of St. Benno's, the Council was severely reprimanded and ordered to hand in an opinion upon the Memorial delivered to the King by Hofbauer. The Council was informed that " this course of action was as unbecoming the dignity of the State, as these charges, which merely generalize without stating any specific instance of fault or failure, are offensive to the Institute in question."

The " opinion " which the council at Warsaw was ordered to give, was more like an outburst of wrath than the findings of an official investigation. The language and misconstructions of the lengthy document stripped it at times even of the ordinary marks of respect due to the Monarch. Cast in the well-known phraseology of the Freemasons, it vehemently inveighed against the " obscurantists " of St. Benno's. It reminded the Monarch that the influence of this Order, which might easily become as dangerous as that of the Jesuits, already extended to Germany, and was particularly in evidence in Austria. " Hofbauer, by far the most rabid of the fanatics," it declared, " travels about, everywhere seeking to establish new foundations for his Order." " Is a Protestant Government," it demands, " to sit idly by without taking any cognizance of the political influence of such a society? It is useless to hope for a genuine reformation in the schools conducted by these priests. He that undertakes to change a monk, and particularly a Bennonite, into a fit teacher of youth, is attempting to accomplish

the impossible. For this nothing less than a thorough moral regeneration with a complete change in their manner of thought and sentiment, would be required of these monks, — and this no human power can effect." Consequently, it is the duty of the Governmment to set its face against such an Order, and to do all in its power to prevent its further development.

The final outcome of this controversy was a slight but evident victory for the Bennonites. The Royal Decision of June 7, 1805, permitted them to acquire common property whenever, in each particular case, they could show the necessity and expediency of such an acquisition. In all the other points that had been touched upon in the Memorial, the adverse judgment of the Council was to remain final and absolute. In regard to the age-limit, the Royal decision professed to see a way out of the difficulty. Since the members destined to teach were not in any case to take part in ecclesiastical functions, it suggested that these candidates be dispensed from making a novitiate — there should then be no difficulty regarding the age-limit. This was surely a strange piece of advice, lacking, as it did, all conception of the Catholic religious life. In spite of the unmistakable benevolence of the King, the antipathy of the Protestant and partly Masonic Administration of Warsaw always asserted itself.

How little was to be expected from even the slight victory that the Bennonites had gained, was revealed several months later. In the beginning of the year 1806, Father Huebl made an attempt to acquire a house, in order to provide more room for the schools. Thereupon, an investigation into the conditions at the schools was again ordered — just as if these conditions were as yet unknown. Peuker, the Assessor of the Council, who conducted the investigation, returned a favorable report. Nevertheless, the Administration, in referring the matter to the King, proposed to settle the whole question of additional room in the schools very simply by dissolving the St. Casimir's School for Girls. To lend weight to this proposal, the Administration submitted that in any event it was unbecoming for a girls' school to be under the direction of a convent of men and so near a school for boys. Moreover, it were better for all concerned to dissolve even the School for

Boys, "as it does not train useful citizens but only bigoted monks." There could be no thought of a reform of the schools at St. Benno's so long as these monks continued in charge. Still, for the time being, their school could hardly be dispensed with altogether. The King, therefore, might consent to the erection of a public school, for in this way alone could the evil be thoroughly remedied. In other words, there was no other remedy for conditions at the schools than the destruction of the entire foundation at St. Benno's.

The King gave his consent to the dissolution of the Girls' School as a means of providing more room for the boys. This is clear from a Rescript of August 22, 1806. But the plan was never carried out. A few weeks later the armies of Frederick William III were shattered by Napoleon on the battlefields of Jena and Auerstaedt. In consequence of these events, the dominion of Prussia over Warsaw soon came to an end.

CHAPTER III

IN SUABIA (BABENHAUSEN) — 1805–1806

LET us return to Babenhausen. This foundation, the third on German soil, was established in the beginning of November, 1805. Here the Vicar-General hoped before many months had passed to erect a convent with a college attached. The Prince himself grew so enthusiastic over the project that he even engaged in making plans for the new buildings; at the outset, however, the Fathers had to be content with a temporary home. Once again the Community, made up of some thirty members, had occasion to experience the trials and hardships incidental to every new enterprise. The building that had been rented for their use was so damp that some of them became ill soon after their arrival. It was not until the following spring that they were able to procure more wholesome quarters. Furthermore, there was not sufficient room for all at Babenhausen. Hofbauer and a few of the others were compelled to make their abode in the neighboring village of Weinried. They lived with the pastor, Father Wagner, who received and entertained them with open-armed hospitality. But as a rule they spent only the night with him; during the day the Saint was generally with his brethren at Babenhausen, sharing with them the usual labors about the house and in the ministry. He might be seen at this time, splitting wood, taking care of the stove, and rendering other similar services. During the Lent of 1806, he assumed personal charge of the kitchen. For years it had been his custom to take very little nourishment on ecclesiastical fast-days; what little food he allowed himself, he took in the evenings. But although he would not eat, he nevertheless sat down with the community in his usual place, after having prepared the meals and finished his work in the kitchen.

Ministerial activities were very limited here. They had no church of their own, and in the parish church they were per-

mitted only to celebrate Holy Mass and to hear confessions; they were not allowed to preach. This was to be expected, since the pastor, Dr. Strohmayer, was a friend of the notorious Dr. Hoehn at Triberg, and in character and principle of the selfsame stamp and hue as he. As he regularly corresponded with Hoehn, he had probably been forewarned against the new arrivals in his territory. The majority of the priests in that vicinity shared the pastor's sentiments. There were, however, some notable exceptions. One of these, the Dean of Illerberg, Herr von Zwerger, made the following entry in his diary, after Hofbauer had spent two days with him in February, 1806, assisting him in the labors of the sacred ministry: "Father Hofbauer is a man of culture and refinement. He is well-read and filled with zeal for religion. He speaks a pure German, is a Viennese, and is acquainted with all the great personages in Vienna, even with those at the Imperial Court. During our evening repast we conversed upon many edifying and scientific subjects. . . . The avowed object of his Congregation is to counteract the evils of this godless age by reviving and spreading the religion of Jesus Christ. Consequently, its members seek to establish foundations of their Order wherever they can."

In the Abbot Thaddeus of the near-by Premonstratensian Monastery, too, Hofbauer found a staunch friend and a Prelate of one mind with himself. In a letter to a certain ecclesiastical official, the Abbot Thaddeus gave the following testimony of Hofbauer's community: "I learned to know these men intimately since their sojourn in this district; I have carefully inspected their house and observed their manner of living at Babenhausen. In all of them I have discovered a spirit of profound and unfeigned humility together with the strictest observance of religious poverty — marks so essential to the true spirit of Jesus Christ."

The pastor of Weinried, however, was second to none in his admiration of the Saint. He revered him as a veritable messenger from heaven. In his humility he went so far as to declare that he should hardly have been able to save his soul, had not Hofbauer come to Babenhausen. He placed his parish at the service of the Saint. He no longer ascended the pulpit

himself. The confessional, too, he gave over to the use of the Fathers, while he himself was satisfied to hear confessions seated in a chair in a corner of the church. With joy and gratitude, he observed the amazing transformation that had taken place in his parish since the advent of Hofbauer. Striking conversions belonged to the order of the day. Oftentimes a few simple words from the lips of Father Hofbauer were sufficient to melt the hardest hearts and make them like wax to the touch of divine grace. A few instances of this sort may be cited here.

During one of the Saint's sermons, a young man persisted in conducting himself very disrespectfully. Hofbauer called out to him from the pulpit: " Your laughter is a sign that you do not intend to do penance." The youth was so deeply and strangely affected by this remark, that it produced in him a complete change of heart, and his conversion followed soon after.

A careless and giddy musician suddenly abandoned his profession: Hofbauer had merely said to him that the bread which he was earning was baked by the devil.

Led by the Saint, a man notorious for his infidelity and immorality appeared one day before the pastor, and on his knees begged pardon for the scandal he had given. The good pastor was beside himself with joy. He openly claimed that the fervor of the early Christians had been re-awakened in his parish.

The inhabitants of Weinried would gather around their guest as children of a family around their father. In fact, they always referred to him and called him their " Spiritual Father." Being a man of the people, Hofbauer delighted in being among the people. He might oftentimes be seen seated in one of the farmhouses, surrounded by the children, to whom he told stories or gave religious instruction. " Children," he would say to them, " remember that a great deal depends on you. You must therefore learn to know your religion thoroughly."

The evenings of Sundays and holydays were usually marked in this section by meetings dangerous in intent and character. As an antidote to these gatherings Hofbauer was wont at this

hour to assemble the inhabitants of Weinried in church to recite the so-called Angelic Rosary, which he had taught them. Sixty years later, Father Louis Vicari, who was then pastor, testified that this devotion was still in use there. It brought the good people of Weinried many jibes from their less religious neighbors, who dubbed them "The Holy Shouters." "But," remarked Father Vicari, "many a neighboring pastor sincerely wished that this same devotion, performed at so appropriate an hour, had been introduced into his parish as well; and I thank Father Hofbauer with all my heart for this excellent means of fostering the religious spirit and cultivating the devout life among the people. For the past ten years and a half, I have been edified by this form of prayer."

His sermons seem to have been engraved indelibly in the memories of the people. "Even now," writes Vicari, "detached sentences from his discourses pass like winged words from lip to lip among the parishioners." Even while reading the Gospel, he would insert his own remarks and comments. The people offered a kindly excuse for this unusual habit of his: "Our Spiritual Father," they would say, "is so full of his subject and so full of zealous fervor, that he cannot wait with the sermon until he has finished reading the entire chapter of the Gospel, but must preach to us even between the verses."

His sermons invariably took the form of familiar conversations and, as at St. Benno's, so here also one had always to be prepared to be addressed directly from the pulpit. For a long time Hofbauer had endeavored to persuade the wife of the old village-smith to receive the sacraments. Her only response to his oft-repeated admonitions was: "What would people say, if they saw the old smith's wife receive the sacraments so frequently?" Hofbauer quoted these words on one occasion in the pulpit, and met them with the rejoinder: "What would people say, if they saw the old smith's wife buried in hell?" Many years later, when Hofbauer's contemporaries had nearly all passed away, people might often be heard to ask: "What would Father Hofbauer say to this?" Although he had lived and labored but a few months in their district, the remembrance of him remained fresh and vivid in the minds of the people.

The Vicar-General soon realized that the prospects of a permanent foundation in the domains of Fugger were very unpromising. His letters of the spring of 1806 manifest the most serious anxiety concerning the future of the Congregation, not only in Germany, but also in Poland. He was convinced that the incorporation of the small principality of Fugger into the new Kingdom of Bavaria was only a matter of time. Consequently, while he labored in the ministry and in the community as if he were to remain there forever, his mind was constantly occupied with plans for guiding the bark of the Congregation safely through these stormy years to days of calm and peace, when it could fare forth without hindrance upon any sea, and touch at every port that promised a rich treasure of souls. His thoughts reverted to Italy. On February 8, 1806, he petitioned the Nuncio at Vienna to help him procure a house for the novitiate within the limits of his own diocese of Viterbo, or in the adjoining diocese of Pesaro. He had in mind a college located between Cattolica and Pesaro, that had once served as a place of refuge for the Jesuits after their expulsion from Spain. He pleaded with the Nuncio only for a large house and a garden, declaring that for support he would rely upon Divine Providence. "There I would gather together Frenchmen, Germans, and Poles," he writes, "in fact, young men of all nationalities, and thence send them two and two into their respective countries as soon as it became evident that God was calling them thither. The people nowhere willingly accept irreligion; they gladly listen to the truth, and they attach themselves to the priests that show them the way to heaven. This has been my experience in every country to which the storms which are now disturbing Europe have driven me. Would to God that I had a house where I could without restraint and free from the prohibitions of civil authorities, train my disciples for the work they are destined to do! Your Excellency will pardon me for thus laying open my heart to you. Oh, how near and dear to my heart is the success of these plans! How I long to reach at last the goal toward which I have striven so long! How, in fact, could I remain indifferent, inactive, and content, when I think of the pitiable condition of religion in Germany, in France, in Austria, — indeed in all

Europe! Everywhere the general conspiracy against the Catholic Church is in evidence. Here books are being put on the market, in which the authors more and more throw off their disguise and become more and more shameless in their teachings. Recently there was published a treatise on the Incarnation, in which it is openly asserted that the Archangel Gabriel was none other than a young Jewish Rabbi! And the authors of such blasphemous writings are priests! Nay, even the Vicars-General of certain dioceses, and Directors and Professors of Seminaries are implicated in this conspiracy against the truth. Are we not justified in asking, then, what sort of pupils will be educated and trained by such teachers? Some prelates shudder when they think of the Coadjutors and Bishops who are to succeed them in office. France is without schools and seminaries. Poland is languishing under the yoke of a non-Catholic power, intent upon nothing less than the very annihilation of religion. How necessary it is, then, for the future welfare of all these countries, to establish schools in Catholic districts as nurseries of religious truth and morality! "

Touching as was this appeal, the Nuncio Severoli found it impossible to offer any assistance. In his diocese there was not a single vacant college, and the same was true of the other States of the Church. The Nuncio advised Hofbauer to settle in the territory of some Catholic ruler in Germany, or in Poland, where, he claimed, conditions were really not so bad as they were painted. Of course, he had allowed his optimism to blind him to the real state of religion in those countries; nevertheless, it was well, considering the events that were soon to follow, that this new attempt to secure a foundation in Italy also went amiss. It would not in any case have provided the Saint with the hoped-for place of retreat and refuge. The tempest stirred up by Napoleon soon overwhelmed Italy as well; and for a number of years the States of the Church, as such, were practically a non-entity.

Following Severoli's advice, Hofbauer looked about in other parts of Southern Germany for an available place to which he and his community might retire in the event of Babenhausen's actual annexation to Bavaria. As he remarked in a letter, he could see no prospects of success except in the territory of

Wuerzburg, which by virtue of the Peace of Pressburg had been ceded as the new Duchy of Franken in Bavaria to the Archduke Ferdinand, hitherto Elector of Salzburg. In another letter to Huebl, written from Augsburg, May 11, the Saint makes mention of three prospective foundations in Southern Germany.

Hofbauer, however, had not yet abandoned all hope of being able to retain a foothold at Babenhausen. The clergy of the neighborhood, it is true, worked against the Redemptorists in every possible way. In the letter of May 11, just referred to, we find the following passage: "The people are good; but the clergy as well as the Freemasons are openly inimical to us and, to their shame be it said, are constantly preaching against us." The Prince, on the contrary, was delighted with the Fathers and their work, and the people clung to them with affectionate reverence. Of their own accord the inhabitants of Babenhausen offered to defray all the expenses incurred in the construction of the college.

But this very power of attracting the people of the entire neighborhood was to prove the undoing of the Fathers. Crowds journeyed in ever-increasing numbers to Babenhausen in order to make their confession to the missionaries, and to Weinried to hear them preach. Hofbauer and Passerat were esteemed as saints. "Give me four men like Hofbauer for the pulpit, and four men like Passerat for the confessional," Father Wagner, of Weinried, was wont to say, "and I shall convert the entire Kingdom."

In a letter which the Saint sent to Warsaw in June, 1806, we read among other things: "My dear Jestersheim, there is more than enough to do here. I preached in the church on the Sunday after the Feast of Corpus Christi. When it became known that a priest of our Congregation was to have the sermon, the people came from a distance of twenty-five to thirty miles. Father Passerat will be the next to occupy the pulpit. Father Joseph Hofbauer's discourses are so powerful that they cause the people to tremble with fear of the divine judgments. I could tell you so much, if I would, for I have learned to chatter away like any Suabian."

In the beginning of this letter, he expressed his surprise that

his letters did not reach Warsaw. "I write to you so often," he assures Jestersheim, "and usually only of such matters as must fill you with joy. There is no need of acquainting you with other things which would only sadden you and make you anxious, and which, in any case, you would not be able to alter. . . . I pray much for you, begging God to preserve you in good health. How happy I should be to have you all with me here, at least once a month! I would care for you as a father cares for his children. I would take charge of the kitchen, and I myself would prepare the meals for you."

In July the Prince permitted Hofbauer to use even the Hospital Chapel at Babenhausen for divine services. The Feast of the Most Holy Redeemer, the third Sunday of July, was accordingly celebrated there with a solemn Octave. But the solemnity was abruptly brought to an end. The concourse of people flocking to the services had so exasperated the pastors of the surrounding district, that the Prince, for the sake of peace, was obliged to stop the solemnities before the close of the Octave. "The pastors," declared the Prince to a delegation from Babenhausen, "in their determination to force the removal of the Fathers, almost pulled down the castle upon me."

In the meantime, the Bavarian Government also became much concerned about the Redemptorists. Fugger's Principality lay like a small island in the midst of Bavaria where Montgelas, one of the "Illuminati," was all-powerful at the time. Since 1799, Montgelas had been Minister of Foreign Affairs; in 1806, he became Minister of the Interior as well. Montgelas was the Pombal of Bavaria, which sufficiently explains his attitude toward the Church in general, and toward Religious Orders in particular. As early as the beginning of July, the Court of Justice at Ulm published a decree strictly prohibiting all pastors in Bavarian Suabia from inviting the Redemptorists to conduct any of the divine services. The pastors were instrumental in having other strictures placed upon the activities of the Fathers by the authorities; thus, it came to be a misdemeanor for any one to go to confession to them, to offer them Mass stipends, or to supply them with food. These decrees were published from the pulpits and

impressed upon the people by the preachers. Even these prohibitions proved insufficient to satisfy the animosity of their foes. On August 1, the Court of Justice at Ulm urged the King to induce Fugger to expel the missionaries, as the poor deluded inhabitants were not only carrying food to them at night, but were flocking to the services in such numbers that it was becoming impossible to prevent disorders. But as territorial changes were in progress at the moment, the King advised a stay of action in order to await developments.

Hofbauer, however, seems to have been fully informed of the situation. A long letter written to Father Huebl, in the beginning of August, shows that he was thoroughly disgusted, and that he looked upon Babenhausen, and in fact upon the whole of Europe, as lost, so far as any further prospects of establishing the Congregation on a firm footing were concerned. He now turned his gaze hopefully to America, where he was sure of finding that liberty which was so necessary for the work he had been given to do, but which had been so persistently denied him in Europe. "If we shall not find true religious freedom among the savages," Passerat remarked in an enclosed note, "then we shall seek it in vain elsewhere during this century of liberty." Hofbauer intended spending the winter with his brethren in the district of Wuerzburg, and sailing for Canada the following spring. His resolution was now so fixed, that he paid little regard to the offer made by a certain lady, and communicated to him at this time by von Penckler, to procure a college for him in Galicia. America, with the opportunity it held out for the free exercise of religion, was now the land of his hopes. To educate and train missionaries for Christian Europe in a land beyond the seas, was indeed a strange inversion of the usual order; but the fact that its acceptance was practically forced upon our Saint, sheds a brilliant light upon the actual religious and ecclesiastical conditions of those times.

The difficulty of making the long voyage to America, while France and England were at war, now caused the Saint not a little concern. He counted, however, upon the Bourbon family in Courland to use its power of mediation in his behalf. Huebl was instructed to get into communication with the Abbé Edge-

worth, to see what could be done along these lines. "We have made all our preparations for departure," the Saint writes. "It were indeed a great pity to send these good young men back to their homes again. If you only realized how the fear that this may yet be necessary wrings my heart with anguish. Oftentimes, when I think of it, I am choked with emotion. I am wasting away to a shadow from worry and anxiety. But I know that your sentiments do not in any way differ from my own. . . . Nevertheless, my plans will amaze you. You will tell me that the voyage to Canada is dreadfully long. No matter: if only it brings us at last to a spot where we can peacefully await the dawn of better times, while we are educating and training missionaries for unfortunate Europe. We should have little difficulty in inducing plenty of young men from the Black Forest and from Suabia to join us, for the people of these districts are fond of wandering about. In fact, I make bold to say, that if we were so minded, we should find enough people even to form a colony. . . . Of course, it will be no easy matter, so long as the war between England and France continues, to procure safe passage across the ocean. England! Ah, if only it were possible for us to settle in England! . . . I never feel more contented, however, than when I am thinking of the savages in Canada. I am eager to see my children well provided for, before I depart this life. . . . There we shall all work together to build ourselves a home. If it were possible, I should be willing to spend the days and nights on my knees, praying for the success of these plans. If you could see how eagerly and enthusiastically we are studying the maps of North America, you would think that we had taken leave of our senses. But what are we to do? Our resolution is taken, and if Edward (the Abbé Edgeworth) is so minded, he can now render us a great and signal service. It will only be necessary to persuade Sister Mary Joseph of the Blessed Sacrament to write to her father and brother, and our plans are sure to succeed.[1]

"I beg you to answer her letter at once, and to inquire by

[1] Probably the Princess Adelaide de Bourbon, who was a nun at Warsaw, and who was responsible for the intimate relations that existed between the Fathers at St. Benno's and the Bourbons.

what route we are to go to England, and how we are to conduct ourselves there upon our arrival. . . . You may imagine, my Brethren, that I have grown cold and am no longer concerned about you; rest assured that this is not at all the case. Indeed, the contrary is true. In circumstances of this kind, human nature must needs suffer very keenly, but we must also have the courage to stifle our feelings in order not to yield to mere sentiment. I hope that with God's grace supporting us we shall yet be very happy. God alone knows in what soil my old bones are destined to be buried to await the day of the Resurrection. But what does that matter? For the love of God and for the affection that you have for me, do not deny me what I ask of you. Do all in your power to further these my plans, so that when Father Edward writes, he may have good news to send me. Let me know whether the box that I sent you has arrived, for its contents are very valuable. Should our departure and our voyage become a reality, I shall send you the copper-plates and other pictures, if you want them; for, once I am gone, nobody will send you such beautiful pictures again." Farther on in the same letter he continues: "If you have a better proposition, I shall be glad to adopt it. Still, there is no chance of our doing much more here, and you know well how conditions are in Italy. Besides, it is scarcely necessary to remind you, that in time we shall be able to send a band of missionaries from Canada to the Orient. If we are fortunate enough to find a home in England, we shall, of course, be much nearer; be that as it may, in fine weather the voyage from England to Canada can be made in six weeks. You see, my dear Brethren, how eager we are to get away from here. Try therefore to send us some information soon."

The Vicar-General's interior agitation, caused by his fear of the miscarriage of the new plan and by the trying conditions at Babenhausen, is clearly to be seen in the lack of logical sequence with which his thoughts are set down in this letter. In addition to these worries, the whole burden of responsibility, as he had explained in the first lines of this letter, now fell back upon him alone. He admonished Huebl not to neglect his other duties for the confessional. "We have a case of that sort here. Father Passerat is in such great demand,

that I barely get an opportunity to speak to him these days. He imagines that there is nothing more meritorious than to remain day and night in the confessional. All the others are like children. They never give a thought to the danger of expulsion, which threatens us at every moment, or what we should do, or whither we should go, in that event. They all depend and count on me."

Soon after this, on August 6, Hofbauer wrote to Huebl: "To-day I have some news for you: since yesterday we belong to Bavaria. When the actual transfer of dominion will take place, it is impossible to say. The Prince has assured me through Father Sabelli, that he will do all in his power to retain us here, but advised us nevertheless to be prepared to go. So far as I am concerned, I no longer have the slightest hope for our foundation here, since the Bavarian officials cannot endure us. Though I am in no condition for travel, I am going to Wuerzburg next Monday, August 11. I shall take Father Passerat with me. The necessity of finding a place of refuge for the winter compels me to this step. But what shall we do, if in Wuerzburg or elsewhere, no one offers us shelter? One thing is certain: a place like Babenhausen we shall not find again in all the world. But do not worry too much. The times are evil now, even as they were in the East during the persecution, and you know well how advantageous those times were for the West."

He again requests their assistance in pushing the Canadian project. "Many young persons are sure to come to us, who will resolve to accompany us. I find my greatest consolation these days, in letting my thoughts wander to the forests of Canada. God will guide us through this persecution to the place where He wishes us to be. . . . If I find a place where my brethren will be secure for the winter, I shall pay you a visit; for I long to see you all before I depart."

He was about to post this letter, when a communication from Father Huebl arrived from Warsaw. Huebl was on his way to meet him in Vienna. It seems that at St. Benno's, too, matters had reached a crisis by reason of the intrigues of their enemies, and the Rector deemed a personal interview with the Vicar-General imperative. Postponing his journey to Wuerz-

burg, the Saint in a letter he addressed to the Community at St. Benno's that same day, declared that he would go to Vienna by way of Ratisbon. It was a most consoling letter: "Have courage," he wrote; "God is the Master of the universe. He directs everything to His own glory and to our welfare, and no one can resist Him. All the plans of men, no matter how carefully laid, all their schemes, how skilfully soever they may be concocted, will serve only to fulfil His holy will. So far as I myself am concerned in this crisis, I have abandoned myself entirely to His will. In all these conspiracies set on foot to harass and afflict us, I can see God's guiding hand, leading us thither where He wishes us to be. In like manner was St. Paul led as a prisoner to Rome. So also were the first Christians in Jerusalem persecuted, in order that they might spread the kingdom of Jesus Christ. Let us leave everything to the direction and guidance of Divine Providence, and all will then be well. My dear Brethren, let us be zealous for the preservation of our innocence and the promotion of our sanctity. About this alone should we be concerned, this alone we should seek. Let us encourage one another in this, each spurring the other on and onward in the performance of good and holy deeds. And be kind to one another. I greet you all in the Heart of Jesus!"

Hofbauer set out on his journey to Vienna during the first days of August. Although he reckoned on only a brief absence, he could not now shake off a presentiment that he was seeing many of his brethren for the last time. He took leave of them in tears. "Pray, my dear Brethren," he sobbed, "pray that the Congregation may not be entirely destroyed. The times are evil — who knows what shall become of us? Perhaps we shall never meet again. Father Passerat," he went on, "will now be, after God, your only support; cling to him, and follow him wherever he goes. Be prepared to die rather than be separated!"

He had chosen the cleric Martin Stark, of Baden, as his companion on the journey. He had at first intended taking also another young man, the son of a certain farmer from Weinried, who had shown an inclination to the priesthood. The youth had made all arrangements to accompany the Saint

to Vienna, where he was to have begun his ecclesiastical studies. But on the morning of the departure Hofbauer on entering the room to take leave of the community, turned to him and said very positively: "James is not going with us — he has no vocation to the priesthood." The lad, accordingly, remained at Weinried, and was still living, the model father of a family, when the process of Hofbauer's beatification was begun.

Just before his departure, some one suddenly forced himself into the room and handed Hofbauer one hundred florins for the journey. This was by no means a superfluous act of kindness. The day before, the inhabitants of Weinried might have been heard whispering to one another: "Our Spiritual Father will not set out for Vienna to-morrow, for as yet he has not a penny to defray the expense of the journey." That morning, however, these good people of Weinried looked upon their Spiritual Father for the last time in this life. He never returned to Suabia.

With the Saint's departure for Vienna, there came to an end an epoch of his life that was marked throughout by turbulence and uncertainty. These years of sojourn in Southwest Germany were intended primarily to secure the establishment of the Congregation on German soil. According to his hopes and plans, this blessed portion of Germany, inhabited by a faithful and highly gifted people, was to become the cradle of the Transalpine Congregation. The attempts, made in three different places, to establish a recruiting station for the Congregation, had failed. Still, this epoch of his labors was not entirely barren of fruitful results. Suabia, as perhaps few other parts of Germany, was at this time the very stronghold of the embattled forces of the Church's enemies, where false prophets were entrenched, and whence many false efforts at reform within the Church emanated, scattering their insidious poison among the people. There it was that, on the one hand, Wessenberg, imbued with the rationalistic tendencies of his time and an open supporter of the State-Church, and on the other, fanatics and visionaries like Boos, laid their deadly schemes, and threatened to undermine the very foundations of all Catholic life. Into this bulwark of un-Catholic teaching, and against these iconoclasts of Catholic tradition, Divine

Providence led our Saint, clad in the armor of a true apostle, in whom the country, for a few years at least, found a real reformer, preaching the ancient, time-honored, but only true methods of Catholic reform. And so, although he failed to accomplish his original purpose in setting out for Suabia, it was well that he was driven from place to place by the storms of persecution. Jestetten, Triberg, and Babenhausen became in succession the centers of a genuinely Catholic movement; and while his labors there were only of short duration and very much restricted, he left behind him the blessed influence of a personality which the passing years and all the storms of opposition and vilification stirred up against him, have been unable to efface.

CHAPTER IV

JOURNEY TO WARSAW (1806–1807) — EXPULSION OF THE REDEMPTORISTS FROM BAVARIA — IN CHARGE OF ST. LUCIUS' IN CHUR (GRISONS)

THE journey to Vienna was not made without adventure. Vagrant French soldiers relieved the Vicar-General of his cloak and probably also of his money and scant provisions. According to the following account, related by Martin Stark, they suffered from hunger on the way to Vienna. Stark bore up bravely under this hardship for a while, but at last he could not help complaining. The Saint promised positively that they should soon obtain some food; but when, that evening, they had reached the inn, they were shown a pallet of straw where they might rest for the night, but were given to understand that no meal would be served to them, unless they had the money to pay for it. Stark hereupon reminded the Vicar-General that his promise had not been fulfilled. Hofbauer merely declared anew that they should soon have something to eat. Soon after this, the air was rent with the most horrible curses: two men, playing cards at a table near-by, had begun to quarrel, and chose this way of emphasizing their remarks. The Saint could not listen to this language in silence. He arose from his pallet, crossed over to the two men, and kindly, but seriously remonstrated with them for their blasphemous utterances. Both men at once became silent, quietly gathered up and laid aside the cards, and summoning the proprietor, ordered some refreshments, and — invited the two clergymen to share the repast. Hofbauer and Stark needed no second invitation.

The Saint met Father Huebl in Vienna early in September, and both remained in the capital until the middle of November. What transpired to prolong their sojourn to fully two months, it is impossible to say. A number of unforeseen developments, which occurred at this time, and which we gather from the cor-

respondence of this period, undoubtedly compelled the Saint to make a change in his original plans. Frater Stark was obliged to undergo an operation on his eyes, after which he had to spend some time in Baden, near Vienna; Penckler had gone to Bohemia, and the Saint wished to await his return; finally, it came to the Saint's ears, that certain steps toward securing the foundation in Galicia, referred to above, had been taken, — in fact, it seems that Counselor Lorenz, the Reporter on Catholic ecclesiastical affairs, had even been approached on this subject. Moreover, it is known, that during October Hofbauer spent a week at Mariazell alone.

At Babenhausen matters reached a crisis much sooner than had been expected. September was not yet over, when the Bavarian Government served notice on Father Passerat to leave Bavarian territory within two months. Apprised of this turn of events, Hofbauer wrote to Passerat, advising him to seek refuge temporarily in Switzerland.[1] It is possible that the Nuncio Severoli was responsible for this proposal to go to Switzerland. Severoli, on learning from Hofbauer, then at Jestetten, of the latter's mission-plans for Switzerland, had drawn the attention of the Bishop of Chur to the Redemptorists; and the Abbot Thaddeus, of Roggenburg, who kept in close touch with Chur, may have suggested the Canton of the Grisons as a suitable place of refuge. Passerat accordingly went thither in October. He looked about also in Chur, in Rheinfelden, and in a number of other sections which seemed to hold out some promise to the prospective exiles. It was a fruitless quest, however, and he returned home depressed and disconsolate. Prince Fugger hereupon counseled them to remain quietly at Babenhausen, and to yield only to force. Shortly after this, perhaps through the kindly mediation of the Prince, the time allotted them before their departure was extended from two to six months after the decree of expulsion was made public. During this period of respite, however, the Fathers were forbidden to exercise the duties of their sacred ministry.

[1] His former plan to seek a temporary refuge in the district of Wuerzburg was probably abandoned on account of rumors of an impending war between Napoleon and the Prussians.

In October war broke out between Napoleon and Prussia, and as the future political status of Warsaw and the destiny of St. Benno's seemed bound up with the outcome of these new hostilities, Hofbauer found it necessary to accompany Father Huebl to St. Benno's, instead of returning to Babenhausen. After the dismal failure of the attempts to settle in Germany, St. Benno's once again became the only hope and support of the Transalpine Congregation. On October 21, Father Huebl wrote to Father Giattini in Rome that he was still in Vienna with the Vicar-General, but that they both intended setting out for Warsaw the following week. "During my absence from St. Benno's, a new war has broken out between our King of Prussia and the Emperor Napoleon, and no one is able to forecast the outcome; we await the issue with fear and trembling." The conflict, short in duration, and extremely disastrous for Prussia, had already been decided at Jena and Auerstaedt, on October 14. Two weeks later, on October 28, Napoleon entered Berlin. That same day Father Huebl wrote Father Jestersheim, warning him to be prepared for the worst at St. Benno's. The defeat of Prussia, he declared, had been terrible; the Prussian Ambassador at Vienna had wept like a child after reading the despatches announcing the overthrow of the Prussian armies. . . . It would be impossible for them to leave Vienna before November 9.

On October 26, Frater Stark received the four Minor Orders from the hands of the Nuncio. November 13 found the wanderers at Bruenn. A student from Vienna joined them, so that they were now four in number. To ensure their safe arrival at Warsaw, they had to choose a circuitous route from Cracow. The political and military conditions in Southern Prussia made it perilous to cross the Austro-Prussian frontier. Southern Prussia was in open revolt, and Napoleon added fuel to the fire by selecting this country as the base of his future operations against Prussia, which, in spite of its overwhelming defeat, persisted in continuing the struggle. While Hofbauer and his companions were on their way to Warsaw, Napoleon's armies, led by his marshals, advanced in three separate columns toward the Vistula. On November 28, Davoust entered Warsaw, while the misled and deluded populace gave itself up

to wild rejoicing. Our travelers' objective was Pruszyn, which was situated in the neutral territory of Austrian West-Galicia, near Warsaw, but east of the city. There the hospitable castle of a friendly Countess, a great benefactress of St. Benno's, was ready to welcome them. There, too, the Fathers from St. Benno's were to meet them, in order to help carry their baggage which, as Father Huebl wrote, two horses could hardly draw. Among other things, they had brought with them from Vienna three cases containing more than two hundred books.

The journey from Cracow to Pruszyn, covering fully ten days, proved a real hardship for the Saint. For ten days his stomach refused all nourishment. As he was clad very poorly, he had evidently contracted a severe cold. "Father Vicar and I need clothing," Huebl had written in a letter to Jestersheim. "Bring a heavy winter cloak for Father Vicar, for the Frenchmen robbed him of the one he had."

In Pruszyn it was feared that the travelers had fallen among robbers. Only toward evening, on December 2, did they arrive at the castle, their clothes in tatters, and Hofbauer feeling quite ill and wretched. Here, however, he found dutiful attention and loving hands to minister to him. But instead of the short sojourn of three or four days, which he had planned, he had to remain here three or four months. It was extremely difficult to obtain passports, so that they were unable to get away until some time in March, 1807. Indeed, during the first few weeks no news was forthcoming even from Warsaw, which was so near at hand. They were entirely uncertain about the fate of St. Benno's. "We live here," the Saint wrote on one occasion, "as if we were out of the world." At length, he got into communication with St. Benno's by means of a messenger. The college still existed, but it had suffered much in the general upheaval. Military quartering and requisitioning had so exhausted the supply of money, that even the furniture had to be sold to satisfy the demands made upon the Fathers. Father Jestersheim nearly lost his head in devising ways and means to meet expenses. In order to curtail expenses he went so far as even to discontinue the solemn services in the church on weekdays. In a long and consoling letter from Pruszyn, however, Father Huebl reproached him for this: "If one is niggardly

with God, one cannot complain if God sends chastisements. Confidence and fidelity in the time of storms and trials are most important factors in acquiring the great science of childlike resignation to Divine Providence. If we succumb in the struggle, it will be for no other reason than because of the weakness of our confidence and faith." He was not speaking as one who did not practise what he preached, for the routine of services in vogue at St. Benno's was followed in every detail even at Pruszyn. Solemn services were daily conducted in the chapel of the castle. Father Huebl celebrated the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, while the Vicar-General, Martin Stark, and the student from Vienna formed the choir.

While the Saint was separated from the world, awaiting in this Polish castle the end of the blockade on the frontier, the inevitable occurred at Babenhausen. In the meantime, however, Divine Providence had prepared a place of refuge for the persecuted community. Shortly after his fruitless journey to the Canton of the Grisons, in October, 1806, Father Passerat unexpectedly received an offer that put an end to all his worries. The Community of the Premonstratensian Monastery of St. Lucius, in Chur, had been dissolved a short time previously. By virtue of a contract, the monastery building was taken over by the Seminary of Chur, at that time located in Meran. The Regent of the Seminary, Purtscher, was planning to establish a philosophical course at St. Lucius', and also to transfer thither the primary school which was at the Court. He had just submitted these plans to the Bishop, when he was informed by Baal, the Chancellor of Chur, that Father Hofbauer was seeking a place of refuge for his Congregation. Purtscher welcomed this news as a message from heaven. It seemed providential in every way, as it offered a solution, not only to Hofbauer's predicament, but to his own as well.

Once again Passerat journeyed to Chur. On December 9, he signed a contract with the Superiors of the Seminary, by which the Convent of St. Lucius together with the church was given over to the Redemptorists. The obligations attached to the transfer were assumed by the Redemptorists: they were to maintain both the church and the convent at their own expense; they were to establish a Latin School for the benefit of the

Catholic population; they were to take over the elementary school from the Court. Moreover, if necessity should require it, they were to establish a philosophical course, and be prepared, at the wish of the Bishop and for a slight remuneration, to assist in the ministry.

Before the end of that same month of December, Passerat sent several Fathers to Chur. He himself followed in January, and the rest of the community in February. Their parting from the good people of Babenhausen was very touching. Of their own accord the people packed the belongings of the Fathers, together with twenty sacks of grain, upon their wagons, and drove them as far as Bregenz. For this kindness, however, they were duly penalized by the Bavarian authorities, as thereby they had stolen a march on the officials, who had planned to drive the community out by force a few days later. As in many other sections of the country, so also in the one-time principality of Fugger, the conscriptions had resulted in riots which had to be quelled by the militia. In this instance, as was to be expected, the Fathers were blamed for these uprisings, and in consequence were summoned to appear for trial before a special Commission in January. Nothing could be proved against them, as the report of the Commission itself shows; but they were set down as characters dangerous to the State, and therefore the King, on January 25, issued an order to the effect that the entire community be led under military escort to the frontiers before the end of the month. By transferring the community to Chur when he did, Passerat had therefore unwittingly forestalled this act of violence by several days.

Hofbauer had probably heard of the offer to take over St. Lucius', while he was still in Vienna. It was not until he had reached Pruszyn, however, that he despatched a letter, dated Warsaw, December 12, to Baal, in which he expressed his sincere thanks for the Chancellor's kindly offices. "Your Reverence has thereby relieved me of a great worry," he wrote. "For this act of kindness may the good Jesus be your eternal reward and recompense, as I shall always beseech Him to be. I trust that our Institute, God so helping it, will not in any way fall short of the Right Reverend Ordinary's expectations,

and to this end I most ardently desire that the laborers and the labors of our Institute, not only during this year, but forevermore, shall be at the service of his diocese, unto the glory of God, for the exaltation of Holy Church, and in the interest of immortal souls. If the diocese has need of a seminary for the education and training of priests, our Institute is prepared, with the consent of the Right Reverend Ordinary, to assume charge of such an institution at St. Lucius', and there to impart to the young aspirants the necessary spiritual and intellectual training which their vocation requires. So far as the support of the members of our community is concerned, you may rest satisfied that we shall not be a burden to any one, as we are not allowed to beg or to collect funds. Indeed, I can assure Your Reverence that our Institute everywhere makes it a point of honor not to be a burden to any one, and seeks in every way possible and with no ulterior motives to make itself useful and be a source of constant edification to all. Our convent of St. Benno's at Warsaw has never, during the twenty years of its existence, become a burden to any one; and yet, we have erected there an Orphan Asylum in which forty boys are housed and cared for, a Free School for five classes of boys, and a Home for Poor Orphan Girls: and in all these institutions the education is given gratis. All this has been accomplished gradually and quietly. All these institutions are standing monuments to the goodness of that Divine Providence which never fails to provide for and assist those who are willing to exert themselves and co-operate with the grace of God. Only in the case of extreme necessity does our Institute permit us to make known our needs to one or the other friend or benefactor; but it never sanctions or permits begging as a practice, for our Holy Founder was convinced of the spiritual dangers to which so many mendicants are exposed, and of the abuses that find their way into religious communities in consequence of this practice. May St. Charles, who sanctified this diocese by his labors, bless its efforts in bringing this good work to a successful issue! "

It was not until February that the Saint received any particulars of the sudden expulsion of the Fathers from Babenhausen and the opening of the new convent in Chur. " Yester-

day Father Vicar received a letter from Babenhausen, which contained very sad news," Father Huebl wrote to St. Benno's, on February 10, 1807. "He spent the whole night without sleep. But we must hope that God will continue to grant us His help. The news about St. Lucius', however, proved a great consolation to us. The church there seems to be very beautiful, and twice as large as that of St. Benno's. Even now, though so soon after their arrival there, our brethren have to hold themselves in readiness for the missions." A few lines, enclosed in this letter by the Saint, express a most child-like confidence in God, who directs all the changes that take place on earth to the welfare of His chosen ones. "He gave the Romans dominion over the whole earth," he writes, "in order to facilitate the spread of the Gospel. Everything must serve to accomplish His eternal designs."

In the interim, the war had shifted to the North. On February 8 and 9, the bloody but indecisive battle of Eylau was fought. It was March before Hofbauer was able to leave Pruszyn in safety, and, after a separation of two years and a half, once again embrace his sons at St. Benno's.

CHAPTER V

THE LAST YEAR AT ST. BENNO'S (1807–1808) — EXPULSION OF THE REDEMPTORISTS FROM THE CANTON OF THE GRISONS

VERY encouraging reports were coming in from the Canton of the Grisons. From a temporal point of view conditions there were better than they had been at Jestetten and Babenhausen, and in a spiritual sense, the new laborers found there a vineyard that never left them unoccupied. Some of the Fathers assisted the pastors of country-places and outlying districts in the sacred ministry; others devoted themselves to the training and education of the clerical students of the Congregation. In addition, a Latin school was established. The spacious church of St. Lucius was soon thronged with worshipers at the divine services, and the Catholics of the Grisons learned to repose full confidence in the foreign missionaries. Father Sabelli was able to report to St. Benno's: "The people here are all enthusiastic over us, to a greater extent even than were the good people in Suabia. The Lord is blessing our work: our congregational singing almost rends the rocks, and the hills and dales resound with our hymns." Father Passerat was esteemed as a saint. The Bishop and his Chancellor Baal, and several Canons of the diocese, constituted the main support of the community.

Chur, however, was only a temporary refuge. Passerat hoped soon to be able to set sail for Canada. Accordingly, Hofbauer, from his retreat at Pruszyn, applied anew to Abbé Edgeworth at Mitau for assistance in advancing the Canadian project to the point of accomplishment. Edgeworth, however, deeply regretted his friend's determination to leave Europe, and, in his reply of March 11, 1807, earnestly endeavored to dissuade him from it. "Do you wish," he wrote, "to desert a people that was nursed at your bosom, because it is grown obdurate and its heart has been spoiled? Because for three

years you have sought fruit on this fig-tree and have found none, do you wish to cut it down? God forbid, my dear Father! On the contrary, you must labor all the more to make it produce fruit. It is true, there is not much fruit to be expected: after a year of care and cultivation, the tree will perhaps yield you hardly ten or twenty figs. Still, you must act as did Abraham and Lot: you may not despise the twenty, nor even the ten."

Nevertheless, Edgeworth did not wish to place any obstacle in the way of Hofbauer's plans; and so, he enclosed a letter of introduction and recommendation to Lord Douglas, in London, who, he declared, was in a position to be of great service to the Saint. The following is an excerpt from this letter: "I do not doubt that a few minutes' conversation with him will suffice to discover to you all the treasures of grace that God has heaped up in the heart of this angelic man, and make you as enthusiastic in his support as I am. If it pleased God to send forth a few such laborers into His vineyard, it would not be long before the Church would again shine resplendent in all its original beauty."

"Whatever you may finally decide to do," Edgeworth protested to the Saint, "rest assured that my love shall follow you and yours. Whether you remain in Europe or go to America, it shall endure until we shall all be reunited in that blessed Kingdom of Light, where day shall be no more nor night, where there is neither America nor Europe, but always and everywhere Jesus Christ."

The Catholic population of the Grisons, however, expected nothing less that a permanent foundation of the Redemptorists. The Capuchins were the old, established missionaries of the Cantons; but there was plenty of work to engage the activity of both Redemptorists and Capuchins. The fact of the matter was, that for years Bishop Buol-Schauenstein had been complaining of the ever-decreasing number of priests. At this period the Capuchins alone were burdened with the charge of thirty parishes; and on account of the political changes in Italy, this Order could no longer be expected to fill up the vacancies which regularly occurred in the ranks of its religious. The Catholics, therefore, felt and declared that the introduc-

tion of a new Order was necessary to the spiritual well-being of the diocese.

But almost simultaneously with the advent of the Redemptorists, the Lutherans, who were in the majority, became actively opposed to the newcomers. The first objections were raised by the Magistrate of the city of Chur, who claimed that the induction of the Redemptorists into the abandoned Premonstratensian Monastery was an infringement on the territorial rights of the city. The monastery stood upon ground belonging to the city, and the transfer of the building to the Redemptorists had not been reported to the Lower Council. This was perhaps an oversight; or, it may be that for a temporary sojourn, the special permission of the Council was not deemed necessary. For the permanent admission of the Redemptorists into the Canton the consent of the Government was understood to be required from the very beginning of negotiations for this foundation. This is evident from the fact that even before the arrival of the Fathers, Purtscher had written to Baal, the Chancellor, advising him that this matter would have to be settled with all possible speed, since an overthrow of the Government was imminent also in Switzerland, and the existing Government would more readily approve the admission of the Redemptorists.

The alleged infringement upon the municipal territorial rights was, of course, only a pretext; but it was eagerly snapped up by the Protestants, who were in the majority in the Council, to get rid of the unwelcome guests. Immediately upon his arrival in the city, that is to say, on February 27, Passerat was compelled to appear for a hearing on the alleged infringement, and forthwith was forbidden, until further notice, to receive new members into his community. On March 12, the case was brought before the Lower Council and this body, in spite of the vigorous protest of the Catholic minority, decided in favor of the expulsion of the Redemptorists. Their stay was limited to March 23, but upon their petition and in consideration of the approaching Easter Festival, they were granted a respite until April 1. At the same time the Catholic body appealed the case to the Superior Council, with the result that a decree dissolving the convent was substituted for the decree of ex-

pulsion. The members of the Congregation were ordered to disperse among the various parishes and there await the decision of the Superior Council — a ruling which even Salis-Soglio, the Lutheran Burgomaster of Chur, condemned, but which was nevertheless carried into effect. By way of a concession, only a few invalids of the community and the brethren needed to care for them, were permitted to remain at the monastery.

The Bavarian Government was really responsible for these severe measures. Before Father Passerat had arrived at Chur with his community, Montgelas had admonished Baron von Verger, the resident Minister in Switzerland, to keep a watchful eye on the Redemptorists in the Canton of the Grisons, and warned him that under no conditions were they to be tolerated near the borders of the Tyrol, which was then Bavarian territory. This order, which provided the rare spectacle of a Catholic Government constantly instigating the Protestant authorities of Switzerland against a handful of Religious, was submissively followed by Verger. In doing so, he had, as he himself publicly declared, no other purpose in view than to secure for himself the gratitude of the Protestant Party, and thus "gain a means of influencing to a certain extent the domestic affairs of the administration."

The Superior Council, which met in May at Davos, ratified and confirmed the decree of expulsion; but the Government did not venture to enforce it. The Catholic population was in a ferment, and whispers were detected threatening recourse to arms to prevent the expulsion of the missionaries. An appeal was now made to the King of Bavaria at the Swiss Diet to compel the execution of the decree. The solution of the question regarding the Redemptorists was thus postponed anew.

Father Passerat meanwhile had been looking about for a new home to house his persecuted community. From one of Hofbauer's letters, it appears that Passerat had been in Zurich, in order to discuss a plan by which the Redemptorists were to take over the direction of a seminary. Hofbauer welcomed this news with joy. "What a blessing it would be," he wrote, "if it pleased the Lord to entrust to you the alumni of the seminary! And what a signal service you would be rendering to immortal souls, if it were given you to educate good priests,

filled with the spirit of the Apostles!" Toward the end of May, Father Passerat, accompanied by Father Casimir Langanki, who had just arrived from Triberg, betook himself to Vallais. Adrian von Curten, the pastor of Visp and the most influential personage in the little Free State, received him kindly, and held out some hopes of finding a refuge there. In Vallais priests were as sorely needed as in the Canton of the Grisons. Leaving Langanki there, Passerat without further delay despatched two more Fathers and a Brother from Chur to form a small community. The plan for a new settlement in Vallais met with Hofbauer's approval: "Vallais is not Suabia, it is true; but something can everywhere be accomplished for the glory of God." The storm which had broken out against his brethren in the Grisons, had left him calm, almost indifferent. "We shall find trouble everywhere," he wrote reassuringly to Father Passerat; "we must not forget the Apostle's word of warning: 'All that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution.' It is a good sign if the enemy makes a noise, a very bad sign if he is satisfied with us. Do not, therefore, be too much alarmed by persecutions. It was in the midst of persecutions that Our Lord established His Church. We know well enough how to preach patience to others, but when there is question of practising it ourselves, we seem at a loss what to do and how to act. Our Lord knows what He intends to do with our Congregation."

In the month of June the Swiss Diet assembled at Zurich. Here not only the Bavarian party, but the French party as well, demanded the expulsion of the Redemptorists. In an address to the President of the Lower Council of the Grisons, the representative of France expressed great surprise that the Redemptorists were tolerated in Switzerland. He branded them as dangerous characters, known as such even to the police of Paris, and declared that he was momentarily expecting an order from his Government demanding their summary expulsion from Switzerland. He himself, however, deemed it better policy to forestall such an order, etc. Nevertheless, the question touching the Redemptorists was excluded from the deliberations of the Diet as a matter belonging more properly to the Canton. The subject was discussed only in

private conferences with the Grand Bailiff von Reinhardt. By means of these interviews the Bavarian Ambassador succeeded only to the extent of obtaining an order remanding the dispersed Redemptorists to St. Lucius' Monastery. There they were again to live in community, in order that they might the more easily be kept under constant surveillance. Father Passerat was naturally very much pleased with this decision. Filled with new hope, he now recalled Father Langanki and another Father from Vallais. Langanki, however, was obliged to go instead to Warsaw, as Hofbauer had demanded his immediate return. The Community at St. Benno's had just been visited by a crushing misfortune.

Shortly after Hofbauer and Huebl had arrived in Warsaw, the latter fell a victim to a diabolical plot. Under the pretext that one of his penitents had fallen ill and desired to see him, he was one day summoned from the house in a carriage. He had scarcely entered the vehicle, when he was blindfolded and his hands were seized and bound. After driving hither and thither for a long time, the carriage stopped in the open before a wretched hut. There was no sick person within; instead, the good Father was confronted by a number of prominent men of the city with their servants. Horrible insults and reproaches were heaped upon Huebl by these ruffians, who endeavored moreover to exact from him a promise no longer to hear the confessions of certain ladies of the city. Naturally, Huebl declined to make any such promise. Hereupon, at a sign from their masters, the servants set about their appointed task. Huebl was stripped of his garments, knocked down, and beaten with clubs until he lay bleeding profusely from many wounds. During this torture the men kept shouting at him, that now perhaps he would cease turning the heads of their wives and daughters. "We shall yet find a way of getting rid of you," they threatened. But no amount of abuse or torture could wring from the priest the promise that was demanded of him. At length, he was taken back, still blindfolded, to St. Benno's. There the physician declared his condition critical.

Father Huebl confided the secret of this day to no one but his dearest friend — Father Hofbauer. In June, when he had

scarcely recovered his strength, he betook himself regularly to the overcrowded military hospitals of Warsaw. There, on account of his being able to converse in so many different languages, his services were in constant demand. He himself was soon stricken. At the same time Fathers Hausner and Vannelet lay ill at St. Benno's. Hausner died on June 25; Father Vannelet, the Novice-Master, the following day. A week later, on July 4, Father Huebl died, clasped in Hofbauer's arms. Huebl was then in his forty-seventh year.[1]

The death of Father Huebl was one of the severest trials of the Saint's life. His passing ruthlessly severed the bonds of a strong and beautiful friendship, and snatched from the Saint one whom he loved as a brother. The community was so crushed by the loss it had sustained, that no one turned a hand to make arrangements for the burial. "The death of these Fathers at first almost prostrated us with despair," Hofbauer wrote to Chur. Other willing hands and hearts, however, provided for the late Rector a funeral service that bespoke the high esteem in which he had been held. The Bishop ordered all other services at St. Benno's discontinued for three days. As evening approached, the sacristans of the Metropolitan Church came and draped the whole interior of St. Benno's in black. Generous offerings of candles were sent in from all sections of the city. During the three days that the body of the deceased priest was lying in state, the various religious communities of Warsaw took turns in reciting the Office of the Dead at St. Benno's, and for half an hour on each of these days the tolling bells of all the city churches mourned the passing of a great and noble soul.

The one-time beggar-student of Vienna was borne to the grave like one of the princes of the earth. Numberless pictures of the deceased priest were distributed among the people. Hofbauer himself always wore one of these near his heart. Even this touching tribute proved a very ineffectual balm for the wound that had been dealt that heart by the death of his friend. It is doubtful, whether that wound was ever com-

[1] A number of French emigrant priests likewise succumbed at this time in the military hospitals — victims of the epidemic. Among these was Hofbauer's great friend, the Abbé Edgeworth, who passed away at Mitau. *Le Clergé français en Allemagne, etc.* p. 172, note 1. (See above, p. 127, note).

pletely healed in this life. This was an occasion when even he, Saint though he was, was forced to pay a profound tribute to human weakness. Huebl's passing was a personal as well as a general loss, and it almost robbed him of his interior composure. Four months later he wrote to a friend in Italy: "I am convinced that our Father Huebl is already in heaven, and triumphantly reigning with Christ. And yet, in spite of this conviction, I cannot cast off the grief that weighs me down. I am resigned to the will of God; I constantly protest that I desire only what God wills. Still, I must admit that since his death I have not had one happy hour." The first violent surge of his grief had impelled him to summon Father Langanki from Switzerland. He soon realized that he had acted in haste, and at once countermanded the order — too late, however, to prevent Langanki's setting out. Hofbauer sent an apology for his ill-considered action to the Bishop and the Chancellor of Chur. He explained that the shock of Father Huebl's death, who had been his first companion and who had come to the North with him sharing his first labors and trials, had somewhat bewildered him, and caused him to act in haste. "During the time of meditation, when one is at the feet of the Crucified," he wrote, "one seems prepared for everything; but as soon as the Lord sends a cross, one feels unable to bear it. What an old fool I am! I imagined that if I only had all my brethren about me, all would be well. And so, on the impulse of the moment, I acted foolishly and without reflection."

His letters to Father Passerat at this time are full of bitter complaints. "The Lord has humbled me by the death of our very dear Father Huebl and of the other Fathers. But the Lord has done this: blessed be His holy Name! — for He has surely done it for our good. . . . The wound He has inflicted is indeed deep and painful and very hard to endure. But God has done it. He that will not suffer with Christ, cannot rejoice with Christ in heaven."

Passerat himself had need of consolation. Vannelet was not only the third one of his countrymen to be removed by death; he had also been his more intimate companion, as Huebl had been to Hofbauer. Depressed and prostrated by his own grief, he wrote to Warsaw, declaring that he, too, was now

eager to die. But Hofbauer would not sanction any such sentiments: "We must worship the ways of Divine Providence," he admonished, "remembering that God can heal our wounds again. Our loved ones have died the death of the just. Do you also wish to die? Why? Is it out of love for Christ, or out of love for the flesh, in order to escape the cross? But it is far better to suffer with Christ and to be fastened to the cross with Him, than to die! You say that you long to be here at St. Benno's. Very well: if you wish it, you shall have your desire; but — you shall have to be the Rector here. In spite of my weakness I am overburdened with work. I have to look to the temporal as well as the spiritual well-being of the community; and I am constantly pushed for time. Pray to our Lord Jesus Christ for me, and beg all the confrères that are your subjects to remember poor sinful me in their prayers. I have borne the yoke of Christ now these many years, but never has it been so heavy — never before has it brought me so nigh to utter exhaustion! Remain in the grace of God, until the Saviour of the world calls us out of this life to a happier one! I long to see and embrace you, but it cannot be now."

Hofbauer had planned going to Chur in the fall, but the death of Father Huebl postponed his departure. It was difficult to replace the deceased Rector. "The shield is broken, — God knows what will become of us," the Saint remarked in a conference to the community. "I have plenty of subjects," he wrote to Father General, "but few of them are at present fit to be superiors. Some of them will make excellent superiors a few years from now."

He appointed Father Jestersheim, who had hitherto been the Minister of the house, Rector of St. Benno's. It was well on in November before he could notify Father Passerat that he would soon arrive in Chur. Did he have presentiments of what was to happen in the near future, when he was writing this letter? His words are like those of a father, giving his last admonitions and directions to his dear children — words of parting and farewell, brimming over with love and tenderness: "Strive to be saints, and endeavor to procure as many novices as possible," he says to all. And then, addressing

Father Passerat, he continues: "Act as if you were the Vicar-General; I give you all authority and unrestricted powers. Take Fathers Joseph and Francis Hofbauer as your assistants. Let them rejoice with you to be the first stones in the spiritual edifice which we are striving to rear to God; for surely they will one day rejoice with the holy Patriarchs in heaven, when they there behold their sons at the right hand of God. But let them also remember that they shall have to endure the pains of a mother; the fear of pain, however, must not deter them from bearing sons to Christ. I salute each of you in the wounds of Jesus Christ; I embrace you all and press you to my heart. Farewell, my dear brethren, — you, who are my joy, my crown, my honor in Christ the best Beloved, — farewell! May Jesus Christ fill you all with heavenly blessings; may He impart to you His Holy Spirit, as He did to the Apostles! Labor to sanctify the world, my dear brethren. If Christ be with you and for you, the evil one will be powerless against you. Pray for us, as we also pray for you, so that, laboring together, we may fulfil the holy will of God. All the brethren here send you most cordial greetings!" This letter did not reach its destination. Exactly one week after it was written, Father Passerat and his confrères left St. Lucius'. Hofbauer saw very few of them again in his life.

June had scarcely set in, when Father Passerat had to inform his brethren in Warsaw: "The calumnies against us have traveled as far as Paris." Passerat, French patriot that he was, hoped for relief and redress from Napoleon, "the great Emperor, the Protector of oppressed innocence." "Let the Vicar-General appeal to him," he urged; "a word from Napoleon's lips would silence all our opponents." A bubble of vain delusion, which Passerat was soon to see shattered by hard reality!

The Bavarian Government, which had been and continued to be the chief opponent of the Redemptorists, refused to allow them either rest or respite. This Redemptorist community among the Grisons, which was so close to the frontiers, seemed to become more and more insufferable to the Bavarian officials, as the conflict in church circles grew more bitter in the Tyrol. The courageous Bishop of Chur, who would give the Bavarians

no quarter, but fought them every inch of the way, continued to be the Protector of the missionaries at St. Lucius'.[2]

Since September, letters passing between the Fathers at Chur and those at Warsaw had been closely watched in the Bavarian post-offices, and at times were even intercepted. For this reason Hofbauer always anxiously awaited mail from Switzerland. "Write a greal deal — like St. Francis Xavier," he once advised Father Passerat. About two dozen letters of that period are now preserved in the Bavarian State Archives in Munich. Their contents, however, must have furnished but very little comfort or encouragement to the enemy, as they very rarely contained anything that could be distorted into evidence against the Redemptorist community. For the most part they refer to business matters, and what else is therein written could easily have convinced an unbiased mind that these men had nothing to do with political intrigues. From certain individual passages the beautiful spirit that reigned in this poor religious community is brilliantly reflected. Thus, when a student from Lindau had written to learn what he should be provided with before entering the novitiate, Father Hartmann replied in the name of Father Passerat: "We cannot understand why you inquire about these things. Do you wish to know what we demand of you? We answer, that in regard to material matters, we require absolutely nothing of those that come to join us. If you bring anything, be it a great deal or very little, you will be admitted: and if you bring nothing at all, you will be just as welcome. So long as you bring with you a good, docile heart, you shall be more welcome than if you came to us bearing great riches and treasures; for I assure you, you will not find ease and comfort with us, but a very simple and frugal life, which flatters neither the flesh nor the passions, but calls for that stoutness of heart and fortitude of soul so necessary for the religious state in these our days. If you are prepared for this sort of life, come, and come when you please! Do not be worried about temporal matters; when you come here, think only of saving your soul." Even such passages as these, however, were interpreted as additional proof of the proselytizing efforts of the Fathers. To

[2] J. Hirn: *Tyrols Erhebung im Jahre 1809,* p. 116, note 5.

an antagonistic government, such language could mean nothing else than that the Congregation, even though entrenched in Switzerland, was nevertheless endeavoring to draw away the subjects of Bavaria. Toward the end of October, Sir Olry, Verger's successor in office, in a new note addressed to the Grand Bailiff, gave an alarming description of the danger to be feared from these Redemptorists: "The nestled serpent lurks in ambush, gathers poison in secret, breeds treachery, and whets its murderous fangs — perhaps even against the bosom of its greatest benefactors." From these bloody premises it was easy to draw the conclusion that the common interests of Bavaria and Switzerland demanded the immediate expulsion of these "dangerous monks, for they plot and plan and attain their bloody end with equal success, whether they be scattered about or dwell together in the recesses of a convent."

Other circumstances arose at this time which hastened the expulsion of the Redemptorists from St. Lucius'. Early in October, the insolence of the Bavarians forced Purtscher, the Regent of the Seminary, to flee out of the Tyrol. The Bavarian Government now resorted to intrigue in order to accomplish what it could not effect by honorable measures. Bishop Buol-Schauenstein was enticed to Innsbruck, and thence was sent into the Canton of the Grisons. The Premonstratensian Monastery of St. Lucius, which had been left by contract to the Seminary of Meran, was now declared to be urgently needed for the Diocese itself. These circumstances, added to the irreconcilable attitude of the Lutherans, on the one hand, and the constant prodding of Bavaria, on the other, finally induced even the Bishop to advise the Redemptorists to leave Chur. He petitioned the Lower Council, however, to defer their expulsion until after the winter, which was now setting in; but his petition was rejected. Accordingly, with November an order arrived, directing Passerat at a designated hour to leave the Canton with his entire community.

Passerat displayed no agitation when, that night at supper, he announced this order to his community. "My Brethren," he said, "be not alarmed: it is indeed a great hardship to be forced to flee in the depth of winter, but Divine Providence

has undoubtedly prepared another place of refuge for us." In four separate groups, so as not to attract attention, each one carrying a bundle on his shoulders, they left Chur. It was now nearing December. Two of these groups went by what was the shortest way to Vallais — over the beaten passes of the Alps; but this proved a very difficult route, and they reached their destination only after barely escaping many dangers to life and limb.

Father Passerat resolved to head the last party himself. This group consisted of one Father, three lay-brothers, four professed clerics, and four Juvenists. None of these Juvenists was over sixteen years of age; and on the eve of his departure, Father Passerat decided that it would be better to send them to their respective homes. "As soon as we learned of this," writes one of these four, "we began to weep and lament bitterly. But instead of remonstrating with him, we obeyed a sudden inspiration to pray, and cast ourselves on our knees before the altar of the Blessed Virgin. If ever I succeeded in praying with fervor and confidence, it was on that occasion. While we were still on our knees, our arms crossed before us, Father Passerat suddenly came upon us. Beholding us in this attitude, he could no longer restrain his feelings. Weeping for joy, he embraced us, and gave us permission to go with him and the rest. 'Divine Providence, which provides food for the birds of the air,' he said, 'will surely not abandon us either.'"

It was not until the Christmas holidays that the entire community was reunited at Visp. The house that had been rented proved too small to accommodate all the exiles. Most of the Fathers had to seek shelter in the various parishes. Passerat and the clerics, with but a few of the priests, remained at Visp. The upkeep of the house was not so trying a problem here as it had been elsewhere; food was cheaper here in the little Free State than among the Grisons. Inconveniences of every sort, however, were not lacking; but perhaps the brethren had grown accustomed to such hardships, as this was the fourth winter that Passerat and his community spent under such circumstances.

But the hardships which his children were so constantly

called upon to endure during these years, constituted perhaps the least of Hofbauer's concerns. They accepted privations and persecutions in the same spirit as he himself did. They were ever ready to meet a situation as they found it. During all these years not one of the Professed proved untrue to his vocation. The Saint was proud of them and of this record which they had made for themselves. With the dawn of the New Year he wrote to Father General: "Our brethren among the Grisons have made remarkable progress in their studies and in the practice of virtue. . . . You would be pleased, dear Father, to find in these young men such true sons of the Congregation; for in all truth it can be said of them, that having been tried by tribulation and not found wanting, and driven from country to country, they have proved themselves veritable martyrs of the Congregation. God alone knows what our Congregation in these parts has endured; but notwithstanding all these sufferings, our brethren have everywhere spread abroad the good odor of sanctity. The ancient foe of mankind will not suffer us to give missions in Germany, — he himself has given the missions. In some places where our Fathers were tolerated only a few months, they effected so great a change in morals, that oftentimes parents scarcely recognized their own sons and daughters for the same persons. There has been a marvelous increase in the reception of the holy sacraments, and general confessions without number have been made! The people thought nothing of traveling from fifty to one hundred Italian miles in order to share in the spiritual ministrations of our Fathers. The mountains and valleys of Switzerland and Germany reëcho to the singing of our religious hymns, which we taught the people. Our young Fathers are effecting astounding conversions."

His own labors and those of his brethren, therefore, were by no means fruitless: the good seed which they had sown, sprang up, and, watered with Heaven's benediction, produced fruit a hundredfold. But the main object of all his endeavors had not yet been attained. The establishment of a large Novitiate and House of Studies, which was the desire nearest to his heart and unceasingly in his thoughts, was still a hope unfulfilled. For twenty years now he had labored in vain for the

achievement of this project. At this very moment, had his plans succeeded, he could have found fertile fields of labor for all the missionaries that those twenty years could have trained to the service of Christ. No; not the persecution of his brethren, but the frustration of his work — that work from which he had expected so many glorious results for the honor and glory of God and for the welfare of the Church — this was the open wound in the heart of this apostle.

There is now no longer any reference in Hofbauer's letters to his Canadian project. Abbé Edgeworth, his friend and mediator, was dead. Moreover, owing to the peculiar conditions of the times, Hofbauer himself may have come to realize that the transplanting of an entire community to a land beyond the sea, was at least impracticable, if not actually impossible. Instead of pursuing this project, therefore, we now find the Vicar-General all the more zealously engaged in seeking a new foundation in Galicia.[3] With this object in view, he addressed a petition to the Austrian Government, in November, 1807, requesting it to authorize the admission of the Congregation into Austria. At this period, too, he came back enthusiastically to his plan of founding a seminary in Rome. In the afore-mentioned New Year's letter to Father Blasucci he wrote: " If there were peace in Italy, I would now erect a house for the Transalpine Congregation somewhere in the vicinity of Rome."

As the small house at Visp was rather a hindrance than an adjunct to his plans for the further development of the Congregation, he now found himself cast back, for the furtherance of those plans, upon St. Benno's — precisely in the same position as he had been twenty years before. He therefore resolved to make St. Benno's his headquarters again, and to remain there until the future should shape circumstances more definitely to his purposes.

[3] See above, pp. 238, 245. In the Archives of the Nunciature at Vienna there is an undated sketch in Italian of a Memorial, which recommends the Congregation of the Redemptorists to the German and particularly to the Austrian Bishops, and places before them for consideration the petition of their Vicar-General, Father Hofbauer, for a place of refuge. It is evidently one of Nuncio Severoli's circular letters of this time. Whether it was ever transmitted, I cannot determine. (Severoli, *Regolari*, I. pp. 229, 230.)

November, 1806, had witnessed the end of Prussia's dominion over Warsaw. In July, 1807, the Treaty of Tilsit assigned the new Archduchy of Warsaw, which was to be created, to the King of Saxony. Thus for the third time since Hofbauer first set foot on Poland's soil, the city of Warsaw had changed hands and received a new ruler.

To a certain extent this new change of government operated to the advantage of St. Benno's. The arbitrary regulations of the Prussian administration which had so impeded and embarrassed the Fathers, now lapsed automatically, with the result that the number of novices rapidly increased. "We have at present ten novices," we read in the New Year's Report of 1808, "and we are daily expecting four others. They are all young men of great promise. We should have a great many more, had we not until recently been so repressed by the Prussian Government." To the new ruler, a Catholic not only in name but likewise by conviction, Hofbauer was not unknown. As we have seen, the Saint had sojourned at the Court of Dresden in the year 1804. Before the end of 1807, the King came to Warsaw; and when the Confessors of the King and Queen visited the Church and Convent of the Fathers, Hofbauer presented to the King a petition for permission to introduce the Redemptoristine Nuns and place them in charge of the education of the girls.

But these were only a few bright spots in a very dark sky. Living expenses had soared almost beyond reach as a result of the war and the depreciation of money introduced by the French. And the end was not yet: the prices of ordinary commodities kept constantly mounting. The regular allowance accorded to St. Benno's by the Prussian Government had evidently ceased, for Hofbauer remarked in one of his letters that he regarded it as nothing short of a miracle of Divine Providence that he was able, without any sort of income, and in a country so drained of its resources, to support so large a family. "Including the orphans," he writes, "we number sixty-four persons. For this reason alone, it would be foolhardy even to think of recalling our brethren from Vallais to Poland." The friendly attitude of the King toward St. Benno's was, moreover, of doubtful value. The real rulers were the

French, with whose accession to power an unmistakable Jacobin frenzy had taken hold on the city. After the hard rule of the Prussians, which lasted ten years, the political and national aspirations of the easily excitable populace had spent themselves. In their place there had succeeded an indifference in the religious and ecclesiastical life knowing neither shame nor disguise, and an utterly dissolute spirit invaded the ranks of the clergy, which caused decent people to stand aghast in mute horror. Toward the end of the year 1808, the Nuncio, Severoli, forwarded to the Papal Secretary of State a dismal description of ecclesiastical conditions in the Grand Duchy. His statements were based on information furnished by Hofbauer and by the new Auxiliary Bishop of Warsaw, Zacharyasiewicz, a zealous and worthy prelate. "When I speak here of the clergy," he says in this document, "I mean both the secular and the religious priests of the country; for the latter as well as the former have all wandered far from the spirit of their vocation. The lamentable carelessness and indifference of the people can be traced principally, and perhaps exclusively, to the clergy, who are utterly demoralized. The more impudent and crafty among them have succeeded, under cover of the recent upheavals and revolutions, in reducing to a system their studied disobedience to the sacred canons and their wilful insubordination to the Bishops. The Bishops are now completely ignored and despised, but none more so than Raczynski, the Bishop of Gnesen, because he leads an apostolic and exemplary life. . . . The people, however, are not really bad at heart, but are instinctively inclined to good, as is evident from their very conscientious observance of the precepts of fasting."

The following incident throws much light on the conditions that existed in the Polish convents at that time. In 1807, two men appeared at St. Benno's and begged for admission into the Congregation. The one was a cleric from a Benedictine Convent in Austrian Poland; the other, now an officer, was formerly a Carmelite monk. Both had fled from the convent, and had thereby made themselves guilty of apostacy. Hofbauer granted them temporary shelter. Bishop Zacharyasiewicz urged him to apply to Rome for the removal of their censures,

and then to admit them into his Congregation; " for," he declared, " I myself would not stay in a convent, in which such a thing as a meditation is entirely unknown." Hofbauer wrote to Father Giattini, requesting him to obtain the requisite faculties. At the same time he begged him not to be surprised to find him interceding for apostates. " If you were here in Poland," he assured Giattini, " this would not at all astonish you. In Germany, too, I never heard of such things. But in this country they put on the religious habit, go to the choir, and perhaps study a little Moral Theology, if indeed they study at all; as for the rest, they do nothing but idle away their time. The Cardinals will be able to tell you all this and more about these Polish convents. If these two men were with you in Italy, I am sure no objection would be raised to their being admitted into our Congregation. They declare that their sojourn with us, compared with their past experiment in the religious life, is like being in heaven surrounded by the Saints of God. Their intentions on entering the convent were the best in the world, but they did not find there what they sought." This plea for two men who found disappointment where they had looked for peace and happiness, was evidently successful, for both were among the number of novices at St. Benno's, in 1808.

The new spirit of the times naturally affected St. Benno's also — not, however, in the sense that the church now remained empty at the divine services. On the contrary, the salutary influence of the convent on the better-minded Catholic circles of the city, was growing all the while more telling. " The church is almost always thronged with worshipers," Hofbauer wrote in 1808. " During the past year the number of those who approached Holy Communion rose to one hundred and four thousand, and this number would have been still higher, if we had been able to minister to all that desired to receive the sacraments, and if the church had been large enough to contain all seeking admission." St. Benno's showed its reaction to the spirit of the age by becoming now a real bulwark against the doctrines of the Freethinkers, which were spreading more and more. The line of cleavage between the Bennonites and the Jacobins daily became more marked. More and

more the latter resorted to violent methods of intimidation against these Fathers, whose teachings and whose manner of life were so clearly opposed to their own. The brutal attack perpetrated upon Father Huebl, as related above, was only one such instance. In the Catholic circles of the city Father Huebl enjoyed a most unusual popularity. His picture might be found in those days decorating even the snuffboxes and the bowls of smoking-pipes owned by his admirers. Especially numerous among his penitents were ladies of the nobility. When one has come to understand what were the conditions existing in so many of these Polish families of the nobility, particularly as regards their morals, the incident referred to above can easily be explained.

On one occasion Father Hofbauer also was caught in such an ambush. For several hours he lay helpless in a deep and dark cellar, his hands and feet bound so fast that he could not ward off the toads that kept crawling over his face. This story, for the truth of which we cannot offer certain proof, takes on a great deal of probability when we recall the remark made by Hofbauer in later years, to the effect, that what he suffered in Poland would never be brought to light until the Day of Judgment.

Martin Stark in later years related that on one occasion, when he accompanied the Vicar-General on one of his begging-tours in behalf of his orphans, he was a witness of the following scene: A certain man was seated at play in an inn, when Hofbauer entered and approached him for an alms. He became so furious at this request that he sprang up, and after loading the Saint with insults spat in his face. But the assailant in this instance suffered an unexpected repulse. The Vicar-General quietly reached for his handkerchief, wiped the spittle from his face, and with ingenuous composure repeated his request. "That was for me," he said; "now give me something for my orphans." The man, completely taken aback by this mild rejoinder, lapsed into an awkward silence. When he recovered from his surprise, he gave the Saint a generous alms; later he sought him out, made his confession to him, and thereafter everywhere spoke of him in the highest terms of praise.

Father Blumenau, who preached most of the Polish sermons, was wont to give free reign to his fiery, impetuous temperament when inveighing against the vices of the times. For this reason he was intensely hated by the Freethinkers. Time came, when he could no longer safely venture out of the house. His enemies threatened to shoot him at sight. It was even reported that men armed with revolvers attended some of his sermons.

But all these intimidations failed of their purpose. The Saint measured the blessing that rested upon his work by the fury of his enemies. His one regret was that he and his Fathers stood alone in the battle for the truth and the right. Anything like harmonious coöperation with the numerous clergy of the city was entirely out of the question. Their mental attitude, their tendencies, their aims and ambitions, were so utterly different from those of the Redemptorists, and even among themselves their principles and opinions were so varied and divergent, that there could be no thought of acting and laboring in concert with them. The clergy of Warsaw were never favorably inclined toward the Fathers at St. Benno's. Even the Protestant Government of Prussia had at times to step forward to defend St. Benno's against the attacks and insinuations of the local clergy. Davoust, in a report to Napoleon, declared that the entire Polish clergy hated the Redemptorists,[4] and Hofbauer himself, when asked on one occasion who had driven him out of Warsaw, replied laconically: "False brethren!"

The Auxiliary Bishop Zacharyasiewicz and the Archbishop of Gnesen, Raczynski, it need hardly be remarked, had no part in these machinations. Hofbauer described Zacharyasiewicz as a truly prudent and zealous man, and added: "He is the greatest friend of our Congregation, and has shown himself a real father to us; his only regret is that we are not more numerous. The new Archbishop, however, was at one time opposed to us; but now, being better informed, he wishes that our Fathers and no others conduct the missions in Greater

[4] Serra, a French resident at Warsaw, reports the same to Champagny: "The clergy of Warsaw do not like the Bennonites; but their fear of the Confessors at the Court prevents them from coming out openly against the Redemptorists. . . ." (Handelsmann, *Instructions,* June 23, 1808.)

Poland."[5] He had, however, very little to fear from the opposition of the local clergy, for the influence which he possessed at Court served as a constant shield to ward off their attacks.

Taken all in all, Hofbauer had no serious reason for regarding his position in the Grand Duchy as endangered. His letters of the first few months of 1808, make no mention of trouble, but manifest rather a cheerful confidence and a spirit for work. The wound which the death of Father Huebl had inflicted on him was gradually healing, although a quiet, abiding sorrow still overshadowed his soul.

On March 9, he wrote to Father Giattini: "There is no news here. The hard times which are causing suffering to every one, do not spare us either. But — God be praised! — our Congregation by God's help is daily making more progress." But this interval of peace was to be very brief — it was merely the calm before the storm. The Saint was approaching the severest trials of his life. Precisely during these days of outward calm, the plot which was to end in the suppression of St. Benno's was secretly gathering momentum, and gradually, but none the less surely, accomplishing its deadly purpose.

[5] From the letter referred to in the previous note, we must conclude that Serra was of a different opinion. According to him, the Vicar-General of the Archbishop of Gnesen and ecclesiastical head in Warsaw had become "enlightened," and adopted certain wise ideas which, with his influence, could easily have been carried out; but he was supplanted by Zacharyasiewicz, an old man, who was not entirely free from prejudice. His "enlightened" predecessor was, in all probability, Bishop Majewski, with whom we have already become acquainted. (See above, p. 179.)

CHAPTER VI

THE SUPPRESSION OF ST. BENNO'S — THE EXPULSION OF THE REDEMPTORISTS FROM POLAND (SUMMER OF 1808)

THE suppression of the foundation at St. Benno's is generally looked upon as the work of the Lodge at Warsaw, which after years of strenuous, systematic efforts finally succeeded in effecting the expulsion of the hated Religious from the city. But this view cannot be entirely substantiated by the actual facts. We must seek the immediate cause of the catastrophe at St. Benno's in the government circles of Babenhausen; for the expulsion of the Redemptorists from the Canton of the Grisons, and the more painful tragedy enacted in Poland, were nothing more than the sequel to the events that had taken place at Babenhausen. In Bavaria no means were left untried to stigmatize the Redemptorists in the eyes of the public as a Congregation dangerous to the State. Widely-read newspapers, such as the " Postzeitung " of Augsburg and the " Journal " of Frankfort, published detailed reports of the events that had occurred at Babenhausen and in Chur; and as these reports had evidently been inspired from Munich, it is easy to understand that they were in no wise favorable to the unfortunate exiles.

Marshal Davoust, the military commandant of Warsaw, chanced one day upon one of these articles, while scanning his newspaper. The author of the article assured him that the Congregation of the Redemptorists had been expelled from Bavaria and Switzerland for no other reason than that its members had occasioned disturbances of the public peace. He was further informed that these priests were in constant correspondence with a certain Hofbauer, at Vienna, who was the Vicar-General of this Congregation. This newspaper article proved the beginning of the end for St. Benno's. Davoust determined to follow up the matter, and requested Montgelas to let him have more minute information. The nature of the

contents of the report, which Montgelas sent him under date of March 13, may be surmised from the opening paragraphs. It declared, in effect, that the Redemptorists were the chief cause of all the unrest among the people of Babenhausen; that their followers grew into fanatics, became alienated from the Government and from the local clergy; that their penitents were notorious for their disorderly conduct; etc., etc. More damning than anything else, however, was the assertion, that in Chur the presence of these Religious had proved decidedly detrimental to the recruiting of the regiments for the Emperor of France.

This was enough, in the judgment of Davoust, to prove the Bennonites a menace to the State. A search of the house at St. Benno's was at once instituted, and the archives were seized. Certain passages in the confiscated correspondence — such as those referring to the relations of the Fathers with the Bourbons, with the Jesuits, and with friends of the Jesuits; those containing utterances of the Abbé Edgeworth touching upon the honor of Napoleon and the French people; and those treating of the Canadian project — probably appeared very compromising in the eyes of Davoust. He immediately set aside what he considered the most incriminating passages for embodiment in a report which he subsequently sent to Napoleon. The following excerpts from that report will prove of interest to the reader: "I am convinced that these men are avowed enemies of the Government, and particularly antagonistic to Your Majesty. I shall have the honor, Sire, to submit to you very shortly all papers bearing upon the constitution of this Congregation and its branches. We must allow Holy Week to pass before this can be done, since an interval of time will be required to investigate all these matters, to hold hearings, etc. A certain Litta, the Nuncio of the Holy Father, is one of the chief patrons and promoters of this Congregation. . . . I feel sure that the circular in reference to the Pope, a copy of which I shall submit to Your Majesty, was sent out and distributed by these men. . . . Their Vicar-General, Hofbauer, some time ago undertook a journey to Switzerland and France, but has since returned. Certain utterances of his are sufficient to prove him a very dangerous

character. . . . Hofbauer, moreover, is in constant correspondence with the Confessor of the King of Saxony. I am convinced that if this Ruler were false, he would grant credence to no one; but he is being deceived, and disregards matters which are extremely hurtful not only to himself, but to Your Majesty's interests as well. M. Bourgoing, of course, sees nothing of all these things; for, if he saw them, it were treason not to acquaint Your Majesty with them. I earnestly entreat Your Majesty to send experienced and trustworthy men to this country." (April 12.)

The opponents of St. Benno's had clear sailing now. The report just quoted, as also others forwarded to France by the Marshal, proved that he had been well supplied with calumnies against the Redemptorists, and that in his eagerness to make out his case against them, he no longer sifted fact from fiction, or even examined into what were evidently lies.[1] In consequence of the depreciation in the value of money, riots broke out among the laboring classes. Bakers and butchers closed their shops and suspended business for some time. The rumor was then circulated that the Bennonites, desiring to create difficulties for the new government, had incited them to act thus. Davoust believed this rumor, and, through the local Commandant, threatened to summon Hofbauer and his entire community before a court-martial, if they did not put an end to their political intrigues. Thus, the Bennonites, who had heretofore been represented as fanatically opposed to the late Prussian administration, were now all at once set down as its supporters secretly conspiring to return the Germans to power. One of the charges lodged against the Fathers was, that they had used their influence in favor of Prussia at the Peace of Tilsit; but in what manner they had done so, was not specified. Moreover, certain of their utterances which had been gathered, seemed to indicate a preference for the former Prussian régime. This last assumption may have contained a grain of truth. The happiness they first experinced on coming under the dominion of a good Catholic King, was probably very short-

[1] Bonnefons, in *Un allié de Napoléon,* 246, remarks that the ultimate and determining reason for proceeding against the Bennonites was that he considered them as Jesuits in disguise. *Aux yeux du maréchal la qualité de 'jesuite' semblait résumer le comble de l'abomination."*

lived, since it was not now Frederick Augustus of Saxony who reigned at Warsaw, but the Jacobins of France.

Davoust was in favor of expelling the Redemptorists at once; nor would he have encountered any serious difficulty with the government at Warsaw, had he taken immediate action. Stanislaus Breza, the Polish Secretary of State, it is true, was looked upon by Davoust as one of the chief protectors of the Bennonites. On the other hand, the Minister of Police, Alexander Potocki, was a rabid Freemason, and John Luszczewski, then Minister of the Interior, was notorious for his impiety and wickedness. Count Felix Lubienski,[2] of whose real attitude in this controversy there were contradictory opinions, was Minister of Justice and also Minister of Worship. He was hated by the Freemasons as a bigot, and by the people on account of his energetic administration and his dogged resolution. The two Bishops, Raczynski and Zacharyasiewicz, however, declared that he contributed much toward effecting the expulsion of the Bennonites by his persistent unconcern for their interests and by his apathy. But while Davoust would probably have found very few of the officials at Warsaw opposed to instituting immediate proceedings against the Bennonites, his hands were tied by the King of Saxony, who insisted on a personal and detailed investigation of the whole matter, and to this end ordered Davoust to lay before him the judicial acts of the case. Davoust was not a little vexed at having a restraining hand thus placed upon him. In order to bring pressure to bear upon the King, he found it necessary, as he wrote to Napoleon, on May 6, "in order to justify their immediate expulsion, to order reported to him any deed which might prove the hatred of these Priests toward the French." This new move is remarkable, inasmuch as it causes one to suspect that the fateful incident of the following Holy Saturday, April 16, did not happen altogether by chance. During the Resurrection Service on the evening of that day, wild scenes were enacted at St. Benno's. French officers in civilian attire aroused the anger of the people both within and without the church by their unbecoming conduct. Bitter arguments fol-

[2] He was the grandfather of the Polish Redemptorist and biographer of Hofbauer, Father Bernard Lubienski.

lowed, which finally resulted in acts of violence. Rumor had it that the Rector himself, Father Jestersheim, had boxed an officer's ears. This may well be doubted; for, as the tumult occurred at a late hour in the evening, and as the throng of people was so great, it was an easy matter to make any sort of accusation or assertion. Be that as it may, an incident had occurred that could easily be twisted to the prejudice of the Bennonites. This is exactly what Davoust had been looking for. After this, it was not hard to say that the Bennonites had maltreated French officers. Zacharyasiewicz was ordered by the Government to institute a careful investigation of the whole occurrence. He did so, with the result that the Bennonites were exonerated of all blame. The Bishop's findings, however, had no bearing whatever on the case. Disregarding them entirely, Davoust relied upon the report of the local Commandant, who had heard only the officers' version of the incident, and, on May 6, he sent this report together with an extract from Hofbauer's correspondence to Napoleon.

The mighty Lord of Europe chanced to be at Bayonne at the time. He replied to Davoust that he had read the reports concerning the Bennonites with the utmost care and attention. "These men," he decided, "seem to belong to the same Society as those whom I ordered expelled from Italy and France. I shall address the most urgent petitions to the German Courts to have them expelled from German territory, and I shall similarly urge the King of Saxony to proceed in like manner against them. This order of priests is of very recent origin, and already attempts have been made to deluge France with them. I have forbidden them to live in community, had their convents closed, and ordered them to return, each one to his own home."

From this language it is evident that Napoleon considered the Bennonites as a branch of the Paccanarists or of the Fathers of the Divine Faith. That they *seemed* to belong to the same society, was sufficient reason for the Mighty One to proceed against them in the same way: further investigations were regarded as unnecessary. On that very day he commissioned his Minister of Foreign Affairs, M. de Champagny, to order the expulsion of these clergymen not only from Poland,

but from Westphalia, Baden, and Bavaria as well. He had passed the sentence of condemnation against St. Benno's, when he wrote: "The expulsion of these priests from Warsaw must be demanded and insisted upon. They are a reincarnation and revival of the Jesuits, and nothing that is reported to me against these priests will surprise me, for they nurse in their bosoms a most bitter hatred against France."

For a long time Father Hofbauer seems to have deceived himself regarding the seriousness of his situation. Years of trial and persecution had accustomed the Fathers at St. Benno's to vexations of all kinds, so that they no longer grew alarmed, no matter how sudden or how violent or how persistent the storms by which they were beset. Besides, they had an implicit — perhaps too implicit — confidence in the King. As Davoust himself declared, the Bennonites' only reply to all his threats had been an appeal to the protection of the King. That the Saint was not particularly disturbed by recent developments at Warsaw, may be gathered from the letters he wrote at this time, for we find in them no mention of serious trouble or unusual anxiety. On May 17, he wrote to Giattini: "We expect soon to open the annual series of missions for this year; in fact, our Fathers have already been invited to come. . . ." [3]

Hofbauer received his first intimation of the impending catastrophe in a very mysterious manner. One day during the Octave of Pentecost, June 5 to June 13, as he was reading the Divine Office, the words of the sixteenth verse of the eighty-seventh Psalm, "I am poor, and in labors from my youth: and being exalted, have been humbled and troubled," he was suddenly filled with interior fear and began to tremble from head to foot. While reflecting what might be the cause of this, he experienced the same sensation a second time. He now realized that God had chosen this way of warning him to prepare his soul for tribulations.

It was during these days — to be precise, on June 9 — that the decree ordering the immediate expulsion of the Bennonites

[3] One of the last labors of the Bennonites in the country-districts of Warsaw was a two weeks' mission at Gluchow. It was attended by an immense concourse of people, and during it 3,500 Communions were distributed.

from the Grand Duchy of Warsaw was signed at Pilnitz. It had affixed to it the signatures of two personal friends of St. Benno's, those of the King of Saxony and of Breza, the Secretary of State. The outcasts were to be permitted to take their personal belongings with them; their traveling expenses were to be defrayed by the Government. The fatal document contains a paragraph directing the Commission to examine the papers of those who, practically speaking, had already been expelled — presumably, with a view to finding evidence of their guilt. This belated provision seems like a gross mockery of the justice of the entire proceeding: first, inflict the punishment upon the accused, and then only investigate and try his case to determine his guilt! [4]

The decree came into Davoust's possession on June 14. Its arrival, however, was kept a profound secret for several days following, while measures were taken to secure the safe execution of its mandate. This precaution failed of its purpose; for a certain police officer, a friend of the Fathers, made known to them their impending doom. As the convent was already being watched and guarded by detectives, he had to come in disguise and at night. Having thus gained admittance, he acquainted Hofbauer with the real state of affairs. After a short consultation with the Rector, Father Jestersheim, the Saint summoned the entire community to the refectory. When they had assembled, he imposed upon all the strictest secrecy regarding what he was about to reveal to them. The news, utterly unexpected, produced a most crushing effect. The room became a scene of lamentation. Everywhere in the house the confrères gave themselves over to weeping and sobbing. But this was no time for unavailing tears: it was important that they be not taken unawares, and so the Saint reminded his

[4] According to Raczynski, the King wept when he signed the decree of expulsion. (See *Haringer*, p. 142, note 2.) This sounds more credible than the assumption of Bonnefons (p. 247), that Frederick Augustus acted from conviction, because he disapproved of the uncertain political attitude of the Bennonites. The proofs which Bonnefons adduces are untenable conjectures, and the assertion that the Bennonites were all Germans is false. More than half their number at this time were Poles. The further assumption that the King would not have consented to the expulsion of the Bennonites, had he not been convinced of their guilt, is somewhat ingenuous. The signing of the decree was merely a matter of formality.

brethren that they had to be prepared to be surprised at any moment. The most valuable articles and ornaments were taken from the church and sacristy and carried to the vault; the relics and some other smaller things were distributed for safe-keeping among the Fathers. The lay-brothers in the meantime made up for each one a bundle of linen, and counted out the traveling-money. The following morning, services were conducted in the church as usual — without any change whatever in the routine that had been in vogue for years; the faithful attending that morning, noticed nothing unusual or singular to cause them to suspect what was in the air.

June 17, the Friday after the Feast of Corpus Christi, was the day set for the execution of the fatal decree. The Expulsion Committee arrived at St. Benno's shortly before noon.[5] The possibility of a popular uprising had been carefully provided against. The streets leading to the convent were closed to all comers and lined with soldiers; the church and the convent were guarded by the militia. Very likely, the principal divine service for the Germans was just then in progress; the preacher, probably Hofbauer himself, occupied the pulpit, while the other Fathers were at their usual posts in the confessionals.

The Expulsion Committee went to work with the rapidity of an assault. The members of the Redemptorist community were ordered to assemble without delay. The people in the church were taken completely by surprise, when they saw a lay-brother calling the Fathers from the confessionals, and even summoning the preacher from the pulpit, though he had not half finished his discourse. The Committee, astounded at finding no sign of surprise or consternation in the convent, feared an attack from admirers of the Bennonites concealed somewhere in the building; but Hofbauer hastened to assure the

[5] This Committee included Margrave Joseph Wielopolski, of the Ministry of Police, Count Stanislaus Grabowski, of the Ministry of the Interior, and Serra. The military measures were carried out by Saunier, General of the Imperial Gendarmerie. That Frederick Z. Werner was also a member of the Expulsion Committee, as is often reported, is, of course, an error. Werner had long since left Warsaw. It was probably in one of the investigations instituted during the Prussian régime in consequence of the many accusations made against the Bennonites, that Werner took part.

officers that the people knew nothing whatever of what was going on, and that no one would resort to violence or offer any resistance. Questioned by the Committee, the Fathers and Brothers replied with one voice that they wished to go to Galicia. Thereupon they were all declared under arrest, prisoners in their own house, until arrangements could be made for their transportation. Under the severest penalties they were forbidden all communication with the city.

During all this time, the people who had that morning come to attend the divine services, had been kept in the church; only now were the church-doors unlocked and the worshipers permitted to return to their homes. As the Blessed Sacrament was still exposed on the altar, a priest of the neighborhood was summoned to replace the Sacred Species in the tabernacle.

Davoust was not, indeed, averse to allowing the Religious Community to seek refuge in Austrian Poland, according to their expressed preference. It was the quickest way of ridding the country of these hated Religious, for in that direction lay the shortest route beyond the frontiers. He therefore communicated with Neipperg, the Austrian official stationed only a few miles from Warsaw, requesting his permission to conduct the community thither; but that official replied that he could grant no such permission until he had obtained instructions from his own Government. The Marshal, suspecting that this was merely a ruse to gain time, and, at all events, too ceremonious a proceeding for so simple a matter, ordered the removal of the Bennonites to the Fortress Kuestrin, on Monday, June 20, whence each one was to be sent to his own home. During the three days of their imprisonment in their own house, the members of the community were again subjected to hearings and investigations by the Committee. Speaking of these investigations, the Saint declared later in a letter: "The questionings and examinations to which some of our Fathers were subjected, were so shameless and impudent, that one cannot recall them without disgust." All manner of pressure was brought to bear upon the clerics, especially those born in Warsaw, to induce them to sever their connections with the Congregation. One of them, unfortunately, allowed himself to be influenced; the others were found eager to share the

lot of their exiled brethren. A scene between the cleric Groebner and his own father, a Chamberlain, was cruel and heart-rending in the extreme, but the youth was proof against all temptation to cast aside his vocation. All the threats and importunities of the father were powerless to move the son from his staunch resolve. The community, all told, numbered forty members. Nearly one-half of this number were priests; the others were clerics and lay-brothers.

On the morning of June 20, several wagons under military escort drove up to St. Benno's. In spite of the early hour — according to some reports, it was still dark — a large gathering of people had assembled. The scene enacted at the departure of the community furnished the most eloquent proof of the services the Bennonites had rendered to the city for the past twenty years, and of the esteem in which they were held by a grateful people. Bitter tears were shed over the misfortunes of the good Fathers and Brothers, while maledictions were hurled at their foes and oppressors. The exiles were packed five and five into the waiting wagons, which were then driven away at a rapid gait, each taking a different road out of the city.

The last chapter in the history of St. Benno's as a Redemptorist foundation had been written. This was the end.

The expelled Religious met again at Kuestrin. A large house was there assigned to them as a dwelling. Nothing had been left undone to provide them with every convenience and attention; nothing was denied them except liberty. Each one had his own little room. Even an altar had been set up for them in a large hall. The community followed the regular order of their religious exercises, as if they were at home in their convent. The Protestant population showed them every mark of deep sympathy and sincere respect. The people would gather in crowds beneath the windows, listening with rapt attention to the hymns resounding from the hall. Indeed, the abode of the newcomers seemed to hold so great a fascination for the inhabitants, that the pastors began to fear an evil influence upon the members of their congregations.

On June 28, Hofbauer sent a Memorial to Archbishop Raczynski, to which he added a few words on the present con-

dition of the community. "We resign ourselves," he wrote, "to the lot which by the will of God has befallen us. It is indeed sweet to suffer, when, as in our case, one has nothing with which to reproach one's self. The decree of expulsion was announced to us without the formality of a judicial process, and was executed in a manner more harsh than its wording justified. It explicitly granted us permission to take our belongings with us, but we were hurried away with such haste that we were obliged to leave many things behind. Here we are cut off from everybody — without knowing why; we are guarded as prisoners in a fortress, and God alone knows what will become of us. . . . But in all this we clearly recognize the will of God. May He be praised and glorified forever! He has permitted all this, because we were not what we should have been . . . ."

For four weeks the Redemptorists were interned at Kuestrin. It is not altogether clear why they were kept in custody so long, especially as the expense of their maintenance devolved upon the government at Warsaw. Probably it had been stipulated that they were to remain under the French jurisdiction until the conclusion of the trial instituted against them, and then in progress. Undoubtedly, manifest proofs of their guilt would have been hailed with joy both by Davoust and by the administration, for it was not at all easy to reconcile the people of Warsaw to their summary expulsion. During the first few days after the departure of the Fathers, it had been found necessary to call out the militia in order to disperse the popular gatherings which met in the churchyard of St. Benno's to protest against the fate that had been visited upon the Bennonites. Davoust sought to stem the tide by publishing a proclamation to the people; and when the public demonstrations in favor of the Fathers continued, it is said that he even threatened to demolish the beautiful church, so long the scene of their spiritual activities. The convent was already in his possession; the community had scarcely departed, when he took it over and lodged his artillery within its walls.[6]

[6] The marshal seems really to have looked upon Hofbauer as a dangerous character. He had even seriously considered retaining Hofbauer and Jestersheim, in his opinion the two most dangerous individuals, as prisoners at

The trial, it seems, missed its mark entirely, proving only a vain effort to establish the guilt of the Bennonites. Nevertheless, the administration felt the need of justifying the act of injustice committed against them. This justification was to be provided by an official communication, published on June 30. But this official bill of indictment, which was intended for public consumption, recoiled upon the heads of the officials by reason of the vague and general accusations which it hurled against the Fathers. What is therein asserted concerning the pernicious influence of the Bennonites upon religion, morals, family life, etc., is — from the Masonic point of view — entirely true. It places great emphasis also on the politicial intrigues of the Congregation, and on their traitorous relations with Prussia, Austria, and the Bourbons. Polish literature down to the present day has persisted in repeating these last charges against St. Benno's, and even fair-minded writers have at times taken them seriously. We are too far removed from the original sources of information to say at this late date, in how far certain other assertions which, it was claimed, rested upon incontestable proof, can be established by facts. Such, for example, was the charge that the Bennonites had supported agents who were opposed to the Treaty of Tilsit.[7]

July was half over, when the prisoners were handed their dismissal with permission to return to their homes. The moment that the Vicar-General had been dreading had now arrived. During their imprisonment at the fortress he had still clung to the hope of being able to keep his community together; even the hope that, through the good offices of the King, they might possibly be permitted to return to Warsaw, he had not quite abandoned. Again he seriously contemplated settling in Saxony or Alsace, since the King of Prussia had offered the exiles a foundation in one of the Catholic provinces of his kingdom. . . . Idle hopes and unprofitable dreams!

Warsaw, while permitting the others to return to their respective homes; and he conscientiously forwarded to Napoleon several letters addressed to Hofbauer, which arrived after the expulsion of the Fathers.

[7] As we have seen, the charge that the Bennonites were in close touch with the Bourbons corresponds with the facts. General Saunier's report stresses the fact, that the community-library of St. Benno's was well provided with literature of Bourbonic tendencies. The General had these dangerous writings burned at once.

for Napoleon had kept his word and denounced the Bennonites to the German Courts as reputed Paccanarists. Even had it not been so, there was nowhere ready at hand a convent large enough to receive so numerous a religious family. Cut off from all communication with the outside world, Hofbauer had not been able during the last few weeks to make any provision for his community. He had now, therefore, no other recourse than to leave his sons, his most precious treasures in this world, to their fate. It was only now that the frustration of his plans to establish foundations of the Congregation in Germany and Switzerland reached its full significance. The closing of the convent at St. Benno's meant not only the loss of one of his houses: it meant the actual dissolution of the Transalpine Congregation. He was at this moment standing before the ruins of his life's work.

When he embraced his brethren in bidding them farewell at the fortress of Kuestrin, he beheld the most of them for the last time in this life. Shortly before his departure, on July 17, he despatched a brief note to Nuncio Severoli: it contains an undercurrent of suppressed emotion — a sorrow too acute to be expressed in words, and yet too tragic to be borne entirely in silence. "The father," he wrote, "is no longer permitted to remain in the midst of his children; and the brethren are no longer permitted to live together." Later he was wont to say that when they were expelled from Warsaw, he had succeeded in retaining his composure and cheerfulness, and could comfort his brethren by repeating to them, "God does not want us here any longer"; but that when he beheld those same brethren led two at a time out of the gate of the fortress, the sight broke his heart.

In the present crisis it was especially important to save the money which the Congregation had expended in the construction of new buildings and in the acquisition of land, or had otherwise invested at Warsaw. Accordingly, the Vicar-General sent Father Jestersheim, who possessed great tact and business ability, to Warsaw, to conduct and supervise the sale of the Congregation's property. This right could not easily be denied Jestersheim, as he was a subject of Saxony. Hofbauer himself resolved to remain at Vienna until these transactions had been concluded, and only then to decide upon the

place of his residence. In the note to the Nuncio of Vienna, just referred to, he requested His Excellency to procure a room for him at the convent of the Brothers of Mercy, stating at the same time the probable date of his arrival. Beyond this, he would expect nothing, he said; he would procure his own meals, and would reimburse the Brothers for their hospitality in giving him lodging, by assisting in the care of the sick during the period of his sojourn. He set out for Vienna with Frater Martin Stark and Brother Matthias Widhalm as his companions. Besides Hofbauer, Widhalm was the only other native Austrian in the dissolved Redemptorist Community. Two of the priests, Fathers Appenzeller and John Egle, were natives of Southern Germany, and went to Switzerland. They set out at the same time as the Saint, traveling part of the way in his company.

The long journey from Kuestrin to Vienna was accompanied with many hardships. Frater Stark lost their passes somewhere along the route to Grosslogau, which was now the only Silesian city still occupied by the French. As the travelers now had no means of identifying themselves, the Commandant decided to have them shot as spies. They were saved from this terrible fate by a Polish officer who had known Hofbauer at Warsaw. Nevertheless, they were detained in custody until they had procured new passes from Kuestrin. Even then they were not easily allowed to proceed on their journey, for in the meantime it had been discovered that Hofbauer, so as not to be deprived of the privilege of celebrating the Holy Sacrifice daily, had several times deflected from the prescribed itinerary. After being severely reprimanded for this temerity, they were at length permitted to depart. They encountered more trouble, when they reached the Austrian frontier; and it was not until Hofbauer's benefactress, the Countess Jablonowska, who was at that time sojourning in Vienna, had appealed to the Nuncio and the Archbishop, and through them procured the necessary passes, that the wanderers were allowed to set foot on Austrian soil. In consequence of all these delays, the Saint very probably did not arrive in the metropolis of Austria until late in September, after traveling through Olmuetz, Bruenn, and Tasswitz.

Fourth Part

IN VIENNA — QUIET, PRIESTLY LABORS — THE CATHOLIC MOVEMENT IN VIENNA — THE GERMAN CHURCH QUESTION — RESTORATION OF THE TRANSALPINE CONGREGATION — DEATH

1808–1820

CHAPTER I

EARLY EXPERIENCES AND LABORS IN VIENNA (1808–1810) — EXPULSION OF THE REDEMPTORISTS FROM VALLAIS (1810)

ON leaving Vienna in the fall of 1806, Hofbauer had promised to return from Warsaw the following spring. But it was only after the lapse of more than a year that he finally did return, and then it was under circumstances of which he had not even dreamed. On this occasion, as on his former visits, he intended to tarry but a few days. After adjusting certain matters of property in Warsaw, he had planned to go either to Italy or to Vallais.

But his plans were not to be realized. His journeys now came to an end, and for the remainder of his life Vienna was to be his place of abode. If we except the occasional visits which he made to certain shrines of the Blessed Virgin located at short distances from Vienna, the Saint never got beyond the environs of the capital during the last twelve years of his earthly pilgrimage.

We possess very meager accounts of the first half of this last period of his life. Of the letters that he wrote during his last year in Warsaw, twenty have been preserved; of those that he wrote during the first six years of his residence in Vienna, only two have come down to us; and by far the greater part of the testimony of the witnesses in the Process of the Saint's Beatification and Canonization has reference to the very last years of his life. The reliable sources of information concerning the Saint and his activities are suddenly closed, and continue so for several years. This is to be explained chiefly by the fact that during this entire period all epistolary correspondence was made extremely difficult for the Saint. Being regarded as a suspicious character by the police did not tend to lessen the vigilance of the postal authorities in censoring his mail; and it is a matter of record, that he

had scarcely entered the city when the police made trouble for him. Vienna gave its Apostle a very poor reception indeed.

On his journey through Bruenn, Hofbauer had packed some of the church-goods that he had brought from Warsaw in two sacks and a trunk, and entrusted them to an acquaintance for transmission to Vienna. This action aroused the suspicions of the police of Bruenn, who, believing the poorly-clad priest to be a church-thief in disguise, at once notified the authorities at Vienna of their supposed discovery. When the shipment arrived at its destination, it was seized, and Hofbauer was placed under arrest. A considerable sum of money, found on the Saint's person, lent color to their suspicions. His explanation that the money was a foundation for Masses for the soul of Louis XVIII, of France, was treated with distrust, although several Polish persons living in Vienna testified to his good character. After three days, during which he had to submit to various cross-questionings, he was set at liberty; but the case dragged on for months. The fact that personages occupying high positions in government circles became involved in this affair touching the character of an ordinary individual, furnishes a good illustration of the intricate statecraft of that time. Inquiries about this simple priest were made in Dresden and in Warsaw; and even in Vienna, Count Stadion insisted on a most thorough investigation into Hofbauer's character. The President of the Police was not satisfied with the information of Baron Penckler, who gave him every assurance of Hofbauer's integrity: Penckler, being a friend of Hofbauer's, was an interested witness; therefore, he " could not be a reliable source of information." At length the Nuncio was obliged to intervene in order to put a stop to the disgusting travesty. He wrote to Zacharyasiewicz, the Bishop of Warsaw, requesting him to procure from the ecclesiastical and civil authorities an official statement, declaring Hofbauer to be in lawful possession of the church-goods which he had brought with him. This, finally, had the desired effect: the police now gave up the vestments to their rightful owner. In his letter to Zacharyasiewicz, Severoli had written: " God permits His faithful servant to be harassed with many hardships and annoyances in order to render him worthy of Him-

self and of His divine good pleasure. I love this man very much — not merely out of personal regard for him, but chiefly because he labors so untiringly for the flock of Christ."

The Vicar-General and Frater Martin Stark resided for a time in the suburbs of the city, occupying a small house that belonged to his former employer, the master-baker Weyrig. Brother Widhalm found shelter with the Servites on the Rossau, and Brother Emmanuel Kunzmann, who had followed the Saint to Vienna, with the Cistercians at Heiligenkreuz, not far from the capital. Hofbauer personally took charge of the kitchen. Black bread and dumplings prepared in lard usually made up their bill of fare. Not infrequently, however, good friends and benefactors invited him and Martin to dine with them. Thus they dined, every Friday and Saturday, at master-baker Gussl's, the brother-in-law of Dr. Francis Schmid. There, little Pepi, the daughter of the family, after the manner of children, was wont to watch the two Religious very closely, as they sat at the table. The mortification of the Saint was soon noticed by the child. "He always seemed to prefer the less choice foods," she remarked in later years; "and the more simply the food was prepared, the better he relished it. He would never partake of anything that was appetizing or pleasant to the taste. In fact, it always seemed to me that he ate sparingly, still hungry when he rose from table."

These were quiet, peaceful days, for, as he intended leaving Vienna very shortly, he engaged in no sort of labor in the ministry. Under his direction, Frater Stark resumed his theological studies, which he had been obliged to discontinue during the past few months. Whatever time was not taken up in this way, the two Religious devoted to prayer and an interchange of visits with friends in the city. During these days he regularly visited the pilgrimage known as "Maria-Hilf," so that he soon came to be a familiar figure to the people residing in the neighborhood of this church. No one, however, seemed to know anything about him, although, when any one spoke of the priest who prayed so fervently before the Blessed Sacrament, every one knew who was meant. He frequently called upon the Nuncio, who considered himself fortunate in having the Saint once again in Vienna, even if it were to be

for only a few months. "You can readily imagine," Severoli wrote to the Bishop of Warsaw, "with what delightful intimacy I converse with this staunch servant of God." In another letter the Nuncio remarked: "The Archbishop of Vienna likewise esteems him very highly." He was referring to Hohenwart, who had succeeded Migazzi in the See of Vienna, and who had become acquainted with Hofbauer several years previous to this date. Among those who, in addition to Dr. Schmid, proved their friendship for the Saint at this time, were Monsignore Muzzi, the Auditor of the Nuncio, the Parish Priest of Laimgrube, and the ex-Provincial of the Carmelites. He was, moreover, a very welcome guest at the convent of the Servites, which still counted some distinguished Religious in its community. Among these were Father John, Father Sarkander, Father Bernardine, and Father Maximus — all very popular in Catholic circles both as confessors and as pulpit orators.

The Saint's Christmas holidays were brightened by a visit from Passerat, who, hearing of his Superior's arrival in Vienna, had immediately set out for a consultation with him. He informed the Saint, that in Vallais the Redemptorists, for the present at least, felt themselves safe, although the annexation of the little Free State by France was only a question of time. The opening of the Simplon Pass had brought Vallais completely under the control and influence of the French. The house which the community was occupying at Visp was too small. In view of the fact that not a few candidates were seeking admission to the novitiate, it became imperative to find a more spacious convent. Hofbauer consulted with the Nuncio of Vienna to decide upon a new and more secure foundation. The choice was so limited now, that they finally selected the small Principality of Lichtenstein as the most promising site. Even here they could not be sure of finding what they wanted, as this principality, perhaps to a greater extent than the Canton of the Grisons, was suffering from the influence of the Bavarians. Prince Lichtenstein, it seems, had already given his approval to the plan of bringing the Redemptorists into his domain. Passerat returned to Vallais in February, 1809. A few weeks later the Tyrol and Vorarlberg were seething with revolution,

in consequence of which all thought of a foundation in Lichtenstein had naturally to be abandoned.

In the meantime the Ordinary of Vienna had requested the priestly services of Father Hofbauer as an assistant at a place of pilgrimage called " Maria-Schutz," situated near Schottwien on the Lower Austrian bank of the Semmering. During the summer months priests from Vienna, especially such as were in poor health, were wont to assist in the confessional at " Maria-Schutz." This afforded them an opportunity of enjoying the invigorating air of the Semmering. Hohenwart had evolved this plan, so as to provide the Saint a welcome diversion for the summer of 1809. But other events, supervening at this time, prevented the Saint's taking up these pleasant duties. In April of this year, Austria became involved in a new war with Napoleon, and the pilgrimages to " Maria-Schutz " had to be canceled for this year.

During the ensuing months of warfare the Saint had at least a rare opportunity for studying the temper of the Viennese people in its reaction to national prosperity as well as to national adversity. He saw the populace stirred to its very depths by the tremendous events that took place. Dorothy Schlegel, in her letters, vividly describes the sudden transition of the people from sentiments of jubilant enthusiasm at the declaration of war to those of almost abysmal despair after the battle of Wagram. The religious feeling of the people is reflected in the following extract: " Baron Penckler," writes Dorothy Schlegel, " is much pleased with the Emperor's Farewell Address, which was published here to-day. Many, however, prefer to it the ' Call to Arms,' because the latter contains no reference to the Divinity, whom they would leave out of the reckoning entirely. Nevertheless, I am of opinion that even these persons will gradually accustom themselves again to the idea of a Supreme Being, for they are really good at heart and thoroughly patriotic." Dorothy Schlegel was right. The military campaign was not very successful; the people began to feel the need of more than human help, and were brought to their knees. On April 17, a great concourse of persons set out on a pilgrimage from St. Stephen's to " Maria-Hilf." Dorothy, who attended the services at the shrine, re-

cords her impressions as follows: "I have never witnessed more fervent prayer or greater devotion among the people; tears were flowing freely. A program of devotions to be held in all the churches has been arranged for the next three days, and on Friday there will be another pilgrimage, in which the Archbishop himself with his clergy will take part."

Two weeks later she writes: "Last week we made the pilgrimage. Everywhere there were signs of the most extraordinary fervor. I feel sure that the good God cannot have the heart to reject these prayers. . . . Beginning with to-day the entire city will be devoted to uninterrupted prayer, for as soon as the devotions in one church have come to an end, they will immediately be taken up and continued in another." Vienna, however, was not to be spared: the visitation of God's justice was not to be averted. On May 10, the French hosts appeared before the city. Hofbauer, who until now had probably remained in the suburbs at Alser, came into the city, making his abode very probably with the Weyrigs in St. John Street. Here he witnessed the merciless bombardment of the city, which took place during the night of May 11. The house of his host was situated directly opposite the enemy's artillery. All through that night of terror he consoled the good people of the house and prayed with them. A bomb fell into one of the living-rooms, but did no damage. "It was the most terrible night of my life, and after a portion of Vienna had been shot to atoms or reduced to ashes, the Generals and the Archduke Maximilian have deserted us. The city has capitulated. Within a few hours the French will enter it." Thus wrote Dorothy Schlegel on the morning of May 12.

The bloody battle of Aspern was fought on May 21 and 22. The inhabitants of the capital climbed upon the ramparts of the city for a view of the conflict. Beneath them the Archduke Charles was battling with the forces of Napoleon. The ground literally rocked with the thunder of the cannon. The wounded were brought into the city by the hundreds. Vienna was soon filled to capacity with sick and wounded soldiers. A contagious typhoid fever broke out, adding to the misery, and people of rank hastened to leave the city. In this crisis, Hohenwart proved himself a true shepherd of his flock. He

summoned all the clergy to render assistance in the hospitals, while he himself, Prince of the Church though he was, excelled all others by his deeds of heroism and sacrifice. The aged Prelate was then in his seventy-ninth year, but he might be seen hurrying hither and thither, administering the consolations of religion and lending a helping hand in the hospitals and in the suburbs of the city. Hofbauer, too, was called upon to assist in the military hospitals. The following incident, recorded as an experience of Hofbauer's, probably belongs to this time. A dying soldier, an Italian, shouted to Hofbauer: "Come here, priest, and I'll pluck the eyes out of you!" Hofbauer obeyed this cordial invitation, and crossed to the man's bedside. The unfortunate fellow, however, did not pluck the eyes out of him: he died, some moments later, a contrite penitent, in the arms of the Saint.

In the course of this year, many of the clergy of Vienna paid the penalty of their heroism with their lives. Hofbauer's strong constitution was equal to the demands made upon it. The fever and his constant exertions in behalf of the stricken left him unscathed. On July 24, Dorothy Schlegel was able to report to her husband at Headquarters: "Baron Penckler and Father Hofbauer are in the best of health; they are mindful of you in their prayers, and send you cordial greetings and good wishes."

After the battle of Aspern, which resulted in a hard-earned victory for the Austrians, the defeat at Wagram proved a bitter disappointment. "People here," we read, "are like gamblers, who, half-drunk, stake their all on the last card. They fluctuate between discouragement and despair, and few indeed are they that are resigned to the dispensations of Providence, and find comfort and chastening consolation in misfortune."

The Peace of Schoenbrunn, so humiliating for Austria, was signed on October 14. The Emperor returned to the capital on November 27. The joy of the people, still deeply bowed in sorrow, knew no bounds. The carriage of the Emperor was borne, rather than drawn along. The crowds pressed up to the doors of the vehicle or leaped upon the wheels, to get a glimpse of him; some took hold of the horses, fondling and kissing them, while others called out to the Emperor: "Let

him (meaning Napoleon) have the provinces; your Majesty has us!" Before another quarter of an hour had elapsed, the city and the suburbs were brilliantly illuminated from the ground to the roof-tops; and the jubilation showed no signs of abating until three o'clock the next morning. If these scenes were witnessed by Hofbauer, they must have carried him back in memory to the year 1782, recalling to him the enthusiastic reception which the Viennese accorded Pius VI, on the occasion of that Pontiff's visit to the city. Ever loyal both to the Pope and to the Emperor, the Saint's love for Vienna must have received a new impulse in this memorable year of the war. Perhaps, too, he was secretly hoping that the chastening events of the past few weeks would produce the same results here in Vienna as the disasters of 1794 had produced upon the terror-stricken inhabitants of Warsaw, when St. Benno's suddenly found itself clasped to the hearts and the affections of the people. Certainly, unbelief and religious indifference had not yet so utterly shackled the minds and hearts of men to earth as to prevent their being lifted by the sorrow of a national disaster to the higher and nobler and diviner things of the soul.

Hofbauer and Stark now took up their permanent residence in the city. Baron Penckler procured lodgings for them — two rooms in the first story of the "Welsh House," next door to the Italian national church, of which the Baron was the Administrator. Hofbauer was to act as Assistant to Don Caselli, a feeble, sickly old man, who, since the death of Don Virginio, was the Rector. In his stead the Saint now conducted the usual services in the large and beautiful church. But, truth to tell, there was not much to be done in the way of priestly labor. Sermons were few and far between, and always in the Italian tongue. For the Lenten season a priest was usually procured from Italy. These scant duties, one can well imagine, were not enough to feed the hungry fire of the Saint's zeal. An energetic soul like his, if it find no work ready to hand, will of itself create occasions of activity. The people soon came to know that he could be found at regular intervals in the confessional. At first, it was mostly the Poles residing in Vienna who came to him; gradually, however, a circle of

penitents from the native population also gathered about him. Admirable disposition of God! One year previously Napoleon had driven him out of Warsaw and brought his fruitful labors at St. Benno's to an abrupt close; and now, the same mighty Napoleon again becomes an instrument in the hands of Divine Providence, driving the Saint from the Alser suburbs into Vienna, and unconsciously causing to be welded the first link of that chain which was to hold him there, a willing captive, till the end of his earthly career!

Hofbauer's unselfish charity soon found another small but fruitful field of labor. In 1809, the Mechitarists, harassed by the French at Trieste, migrated to Vienna, where they found hospitality at first with the Servites. It was here, probably, that the Saint learned to know and cherish these monks. In February, 1810, Emperor Francis granted them the vacant Capuchin monastery on the "Platzl." This furnished Hofbauer with an opportunity of showing to what lengths he could carry his generosity of heart. Although he himself was practically an outcast at this time, vainly seeking assistance and recognition for his own Congregation, he did all in his power and used what influence he had to prepare for these strange Religious a comfortable home in Vienna. These unique figures with their long, flowing beards and their peculiar ceremonial, were somewhat of a curiosity, and the people held aloof from them at first. For three weeks Hofbauer lived with these Mechitarists, so as to be of greater service to them in putting the church and the house in order. He preached, heard confessions, and employed every occasion to attract the people to their church. After the services on Sunday afternoons, he would gather these priests about him, and discourse to them in familiar conferences on the manner of discharging the pastoral duties according to the customs of Vienna, with which they were as yet unfamiliar. Little wonder that the Mechitarists, in grateful remembrance of his charitable efforts, call him the "Guardian Angel" of their Congregation!

The year 1810 came, and the affair regarding the property of St. Benno's had not yet been settled. In the meantime, the Archbishop had again requested Hofbauer to render assistance during the summer at the shrine of "Maria-Schutz" on

the Semmering, where the usual pilgrimages had to be canceled the previous year. Hofbauer, glad of an opportunity to exercise his zeal after a season of enforced inactivity, had made all necessary preparations to go thither on May 1, when once again an obstacle arose to prevent him.

As we have seen, when Hofbauer set foot on Austrian soil, he was detained by the authorities, until the ownership of the church-goods he had brought with him from Warsaw could be investigated. These investigations had an unfortunate sequel. They served to refresh the memories of the Austrian police, who, in going over the records at Bruenn, were reminded that this priest Hofbauer had enticed four boys to Warsaw in 1795, and had escaped from jail in 1798. The boys had immediately been ordered home to their parents; Hofbauer's nephew Francis, however, had disregarded this order, and until now had not returned to his home. The authorities were well aware that the youth belonged to the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer these many years. His father, Lawrence Hofbauer, though repeatedly warned to bring his son back to Austria, had always succeeded, under some pretext or other, in evading these demands. But the authorities refused to let the matter rest. The case was now re-opened and prosecuted with renewed energy. Father Hofbauer was summoned to a court-hearing in Vienna, while his brother had to submit to a similar ordeal in Moravia. The first question to be decided was, whether Hofbauer had been an accomplice in the abduction of his nephew; if this could have been proved, he would have been liable to the severest penalties. The solution was sought in the Saint's personal correspondence. A search of Lawrence Hofbauer's premises, however, failed to unearth any incriminating evidence. No letters touching this matter, the officials of Bruenn reported to the Emperor — for in those days the Monarch had to be informed of all such highly important matters — " notwithstanding a most diligent search, could anywhere be found." The case against the Saint was consequently dropped for lack of evidence; but his brother Lawrence was less fortunate: he was sentenced to six weeks' hard labor " for not preventing the clandestine migration of his son."

The police used this investigation, which lasted until well

on into August of 1810, to learn definitely and exactly what manner of man Hofbauer was. On his arrival in Vienna, he had asked permission to remain in the country until he should have settled his affairs to his satisfaction. This had been granted. But now the authorities discovered that he was exercising his priestly ministry, and that, in May, he was moreover to take over the duties of an Assistant Priest at "Maria-Schutz." This they had learned from Martin Stark, whom they had questioned concerning Hofbauer's activities. There followed an immediate exchange of notes between the Chancellor, Count Ugarte, and the Archbishop, Hohenwart. The latter very clearly stated his position and without apology defended his right to assign ecclesiastical work when and as he deemed advisable. Ugarte, in a courteous reply, protested that he was merely endeavoring "to regulate the affairs of this priest in accordance with the law." This "legal settlement," it developed, consisted in confronting Hofbauer with the alternative of quitting the country with Stark or of renouncing his allegiance to the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer, which was not recognized in Austria. It is quite probable that the Saint by this time had convinced himself of the necessity of making a definite choice of a place of domicile; hence, evading both the alternatives set before him, he declared that he wished to end his life in his own fatherland, and disarmed all suspicion by assuring the officials that he was quite willing "to submit to immediate expulsion from the land of his birth, if from any action of his he could be legally shown to have acted otherwise than as an orthodox priest or as a loyal subject of the realm." The authorities accepted this as satisfactory, but resolved nevertheless to keep him under surveillance.

These events took place in the fall of 1810. The further development of affairs in Switzerland accounts for the Vicar-General's resolution, taken at this time, to remain permanently in Vienna. It was not so much his love for Vienna, as his desire to ensure the well-being of the Transalpine Congregation of which he was the highest Superior, that caused him finally to come to this decision.

A report received from Passerat, in the spring of 1810, contained a very comforting description of the situation in Vallais.

Hofbauer read with not a little satisfaction that for the present the community there was in no danger. All were laboring quietly, the authorities were placing no obstacles in the way of their activities, and they were enjoying the good-will of both the people and the government. Passerat and one of the Polish Fathers were the only priests at home with the four brothers and twenty students. The Fathers, without exception, were very zealous; they all longed to see him again, but they were so scattered that it was next to impossible for them to write individual letters to the Vicar-General; for the future, however, Passerat promised that each of them should enclose a note when he himself wrote to the Saint.

This letter contained a note from Father Joseph Hofbauer, of Lorraine, who at this time was a chaplain and professor at Lenk. Very touchingly does this Father express his longing to see the Saint: " I ardently desire, dear Father, to see Your Reverence again. What would I not give for one hour's conversation with you! I am absent in body, but in thought and in spirit I am never away from my beloved Father; I bear you constantly in my heart, and I am daily mindful of your spiritual and temporal welfare in my prayers. May God grant Your Reverence many more fruitful years of service, and may He grant us all to see that happy day, when we shall all once again be united under your wise and genial guidance, never more to be separated until the end of our lives! For this do I most earnestly hope and pray, although at times I seem to be hoping against all hope." It was this Father Joseph Hofbauer whom Passerat recommended to the Vicar-General as the one best fitted to be the Rector in Switzerland. Passerat himself sought to decline this office, assigning many reasons to prove himself entirely unsuited for it. Concluding this letter, Passerat wrote: " Everything else here is well-ordered; the only thing lacking is an able Rector." The Saint, however, did not share this opinion. He wrote to Father General: " Father Passerat is a most prudent and fervent man. He requires from all the most exact observance of the Rules and Constitutions. At the same time he seems to be patience itself. His fervor is the admiration of all, and he neither shuns labor nor dreads danger. In him the Congregation possesses a model

of all virtues. Should God call me out of this life to Himself, I beseech you to appoint him as my successor in the office I hold."

Passerat seemed to divine that the peace his community was enjoying for the nonce, was only the calm before the storm. Accordingly, he did not discontinue his efforts to secure a new place of refuge for his subjects. In April, 1810, he wrote to the Nuncio at Vienna: "At this moment I can see no other country offering us a welcome than the Grand Duchy of Wuerzburg." He begs the Nuncio to write what he thought of this plan of transferring the activities of the Redemptorists thither, and promised to accept whatever the Nuncio advised as the will of Heaven. Passerat's fears were realized sooner than he had expected. Before the close of this year the Republic of Vallais was declared a part of France, the Redemptorists thus becoming subjects of Napoleon. As the new Government immediately demanded a copy of the Rule for inspection, Passerat knew that their sojourn in these parts had come to an end, and that they were doomed to reach once again for the wanderer's staff. Accompanied by Father Franzen, he left Vallais in October, and turned his steps toward Vienna, there to confer with Hofbauer and the Nuncio. Bishop Maximus Guisolan, O. Cap., of Friburg, Switzerland, whom they visited on the way, wished to retain them in his diocese, but as Hofbauer had summoned them to the metropolis, they were obliged to decline his invitation.

Severoli advised against transferring the entire community to Wuerzburg, because the prospects in that territory, owing to the unsettled status of the Rhenish Confederation, were at best very problematical. The idea of a new foundation was therefore abandoned altogether for the time being; instead, it was decided to let the members of the Congregation now living in Switzerland, find refuge and shelter while laboring individually, some in Switzerland itself, and some in Wuerzburg. For several of the Fathers, however, the Nuncio had prepared another field of activity. The Mission in charge of the Conventual Franciscans in the Moldau district was sorely in need of capable priests. In vain had Severoli, to whose province the southeastern mission-districts belonged, looked about for

missionaries, until the crisis which the Redemptorists had met with in Vallais seemed to hold out the relief he sought. With the consent of Hofbauer and Passerat, the Nuncio now communicated with Father Leardi at Jassy, who was the Prefect of the Moldau Mission-District, offering him six of the Redemptorists for three of the vacant parishes. These, he remarked, would in no way interfere with the usual work of the Mission, nor would they introduce any innovations in the Liturgy, "as they were true Romans" (*essendo essi Romani e Romanissimi in tutto*). The Nuncio's plan, however, met with obstacles. Hofbauer had required as a condition for taking up this work, that at least two of his missionaries be assigned to each parish: to this objections were at once offered. Moreover, the Conventual Franciscans promised to supply a Bishop and five priests of their own Order to fill the vacancies. The Nuncio was therefore obliged to abandon the entire plan.

While Passerat was sojourning with Hofbauer in Vienna, the Fathers at Visp received the order to leave Vallais within two or three weeks. The Bishop of Sitten, however, obtained a rescript from the local government, permitting the Redemptorists to remain in the district for the time being, provided they did not form a community. This was the state of affairs when Hofbauer resolved to make Vienna his place of residence until further developments. The Transalpine Congregation, as such, was now entirely dissolved. Its members lived in two distinct groups, far removed from each other, either in Poland or in Switzerland, and not at all in community: they were all scattered — some residing in parishes, others with their own families. Nothing now remained to Hofbauer but to resign himself humbly to the dispositions of Providence, and wait in patience for better times when, if God so willed, he could gather his scattered flock once again into the fold. For this period of expectation and long-suffering there was no more suitable place than the metropolis of Austria. To an even greater extent than heretofore, Vienna now became, as it were, the base of his operations. Here he could best preserve a contact between the two principal groups of his brethren; and only from this city, the central point of the Europe of those days, could he view, as it would have been

impossible to view from a mountain-parish in Switzerland, the ever-changing march of events in the great world, on the course of which depended the future destiny of his life's work.

Passerat left Vienna for Wuerzburg, in January, 1811, where he seems to have remained until the end of the following spring. No doubt, he had no hesitation in disclosing to the Ruler of the country, the pious and benevolent Archduke Ferdinand, all the difficulties that beset his path. But how could the latter think of according the Redemptorists a welcome to his domain, after they had twice been outlawed by Napoleon? Passerat for this reason turned to Bishop Maximus, of Friburg, who was glad to fill up the vacancies among the secular clergy with the expelled Religious. The Government of the Canton, however, consented only provisionally to the introduction of the exiles, refusing to extend its permission for their stay beyond a year. After a long and fruitless search for a suitable dwelling-house, Proroman, the Chancellor of the Lower Council of Friburg, came to the rescue of the Fathers, by offering Passerat a country-seat at Balderswyl in the German section of the Canton. Summoning his confrères from Vallais, Passerat took possession of the estate, on June 25, 1811. To render it easier for the clerics to continue their studies, however, he transferred his domicile in the fall to a house in the city of Friburg, where the Seminary was located. He himself remained with the clerics in Friburg; the other Fathers accepted posts in the ministry in Switzerland and even in Alsace. Matters continued in this fashion for several years following. Under all these trying circumstances Father Passerat strove to keep alive among his subjects the true spirit of the Congregation. He required those who lived or labored in the vicinity to visit him regularly at Friburg. Nor did he neglect to add the power of prayer to his other efforts for the preservation of the religious spirit of the exiles. The rosary was rarely out of his hands, and so assiduously did he tell his beads during these three years, that the skin of his fingers became calloused and hard as horn.

Passerat entertained no illusions about the permanency of this foundation in Switzerland. He regarded it merely as a providential resting-place for himself and his brethren on their

way to America. Seventeen years later he wrote: "When I came to Friburg in 1811, I really had no other thought in mind than to wait patiently there until the storm had subsided, and then to continue our journey to America. Good God! who but a prophet could have harbored the notion of settling in Switzerland in those stormy days! The Lord, however, has ordained otherwise."

Father Hofbauer transferred all his powers as Vicar-General, in writing, to Father Passerat. Owing to the relentless vigilance of the police, a regular exchange of letters between him and the brethren in Switzerland had become quite impossible. Moreover, for his own protection and the security of his domicile in Austria, it was important to ward off every suspicion of his being connected with any Religious Order outside the realm. Thus it not infrequently happened, that for long periods at a time, he was without any news of his brethren.

The condition of affairs in Poland rendered the prospects of the Transalpine Congregation still more hopeless. As time passed, the government of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw became more and more a tool in the hands of the Freemasons. It was they that dominated its policies; the benevolence of the king was of no use to the Fathers, for he was powerless. The expulsion of the Bennonites threatened to develop into a general persecution of all religious houses. The tempest indeed abated before matters had come to such a pass, and for the next few years the Church had a short respite. Nevertheless, individual convents here and there were suppressed, and many a venerable old church in Warsaw was degraded to profane uses. St. Benno's did not escape. The church was at first turned into a storage-house for the national archives; later it was sold and converted into a factory for the making of cutlery.

The settlement of the Redemptorists' property rights in Warsaw proved a long-drawn-out affair, which detained Father Jestersheim there until the close of the year 1811. In the decree of expulsion the king had expressly stipulated that all the expenses incurred by the administration in the execution of the decree, and the additional expense of the incarceration of the exiles at Kuestrin be met by the local government. This

order, however, was totally disregarded, the government reimbursing itself for all these expenditures from the proceeds of the sale of the Redemptorist property. Yet, after this injustice had been perpetrated, a considerable sum remained to serve the Fathers in good stead in the event of their making a fresh effort for the permanency of the Institute. For the time being the Vicar-General left his money deposited in Poland.

Jestersheim and Podgórski continued to live in the neighborhood of Warsaw for the next few years. Jestersheim assumed charge of the parish of Pruszyn near Siedlce, where he built a beautiful church. He hoped to see the Congregation arise anew from this place. That hope was never realized. From 1803 to 1813, Father Podgórski acted in the capacity of Assistant Priest at Radzymin, not far from Warsaw, where the Fathers had long been well known. From this point Podgórski was able to keep up a regular correspondence with Hofbauer.

The Saint, from his place of refuge in Vienna, was thus obliged to witness with many a heart-ache how his beloved Poland, for which he had sacrificed the best energies of his life, was being prostrated and ruined by a government hostile to religion. The longing to return to St. Benno's never left him. What the Nuncio once wrote to Bishop Zacharyasiewicz was only the echo of Hofbauer's frequent conversations with him: "If only we might hope for the return of this excellent man and his Institute to the city of Warsaw!"

The warm, fraternal relations which for some time had existed between the Transalpine Fathers and the Congregation in Italy had recently shown signs of cooling. During the last sad years at St. Benno's, relations with Father Blasucci had again become somewhat strained. Neither Blasucci nor Hofbauer was to blame for this misunderstanding, which, fortunately, never reached the point of a permanent rupture. The cause must rather be sought in the conditions existing within the body of the Congregation at this period. The schism between the Neapolitan communities and those in the States of the Church, which the Chapter of 1793 had healed, left behind it serious after-effects. The disturbances accompanying the entrance of the French into Italy, in 1798, threatened to cause a new schism in the Congregation. The ex-General, Father

de Paola, cannot be held wholly guiltless in the rôle he assumed in this crisis. At the outbreak of these disturbances he contrived to have the government of the Houses in the States of the Church confided to himself as sole Superior independent of Blasucci. The foundations at Warsaw and at Mitau he regarded as likewise subject to his jurisdiction. As early as the year 1797, he demanded from Hofbauer a Report of the administration and activities of these houses during the years that had elapsed since he had laid down his office as Superior General. So far as can be learned, however, Blasucci continued to be regarded by the brethren at St. Benno's as their immediate Superior. After normal conditions had been restored in Italy, the Houses in the Papal States remained under the government of de Paola as their Provincial. It must have been hard for this man, born with a natural aptitude for leadership and for governing, to subordinate his judgment to his own cousin, Blasucci. Aside from this, on matters of no little importance there were still differences of opinion between the Fathers in the States of the Church and those in the Neapolitan Kingdom. These differences oftentimes developed to the point of actual opposition resulting in many a heated dispute between the two groups.

Hofbauer and Huebl knew nothing of this state of affairs until their journey of 1803 brought them to Rome. Nevertheless, Hofbauer had to suffer much on account of it in the course of the ensuing years. His correspondence with Blasucci during the years 1804, 1805 and 1806, seems to have been interrupted by long intervals of silence. The silence of the Vicar-General is easily explained: it was due partly to his frequent change of domicile, and partly to the war that was devastating Central Europe. Blasucci, who had received from Hofbauer only meager accounts of certain new foundations, began to suspect that the latter was preparing to break away from him. What lent particular weight to this suspicion was de Paola's declaration that the Transalpine Redemptorists were subject to his jurisdiction. In a letter to Father Huebl — Hofbauer was at Babenhausen at the time — written, indeed, in a very respectful tone, Blasucci gave expression to his fears. But once again the Superior General was assured of the loyalty of the

Transalpine Fathers. The misunderstanding was explained to the entire satisfaction of Blasucci. Moreover, the principal cause of all this trouble was removed, when the Pope at this critical juncture revoked de Paola's jurisdiction as Provincial, and placed the Houses in the Papal States under the immediate jurisdiction of Blasucci. The complete break between Blasucci and de Paola ensued in 1808. Persisting in his own views, de Paola, as Rector of Frosinone, endeavored on his own authority to establish an educational institution there. This, of course, was in direct opposition to the Decrees of the Chapter of 1793, and his disobedience in this matter finally caused him to be expelled from the Congregation.

De Paola's expulsion, as may well be imagined, reacted unfavorably upon the Transalpine members and their work in the North. The utter collapse of all the projects which Hofbauer had set on foot in the North, occurred in this very year. Must not this coincidence have produced the fatal impression, that the blessing of God was not upon this work beyond the Alps, but that, on the contrary, an unlucky star had cast an evil influence over all that de Paola had inspired or undertaken? This was the very attitude that the Fathers in Naples adopted. There the ex-General de Paola was looked upon as the originator of the Transalpine foundations. The unfavorable judgment visited upon de Paola grew more pronounced from day to day, until at length he was declared responsible for the entire schism. Hofbauer, originally a disciple of de Paola, could not wholly escape the odium which attached to his master's name. It was inevitable that some of it should revert upon his head, resulting for the Saint in not a little suffering and annoyance. Judged by human standards alone, his whole project of carrying the Congregation beyond the Alps seemed to be nothing else than an attempt that had signally failed, and an empty episode in the sad era of de Paola.

But God has His own times and Providence its own unsearchable ways. Three decades had passed since Hofbauer, a baker's apprentice in his thirtieth year, after repeated, fruitless attempts to reach the priesthood, retraced his steps sadly to Vienna, convinced at last that the dream of his youth had to be renounced forever. And yet, in the designs of God,

that journey to Vienna was the last stretch of the road leading him to the altar. So it will be again. Now an old man of sixty years, he once again makes his weary way, over the ruins of every foundation he had endeavored to establish for his Congregation, to Austria, the land of his youth. He there finds an outlet for his zeal and energy in an humble station as Assistant Priest at the "Welsh" Church, in Vienna. He is soon completely taken up with pastoral duties and charitable works that fill out his day, but seem to lead him farther and farther away from the real task of his life. And yet, all this is only the last step toward the goal which, though hidden from his eyes, is actually near at hand. The immediate and tangible fruits of this, his apostolate in Vienna — fruits that he himself, before he was called from the turmoil of this present life, saw ripening to maturity — were nothing less than the introduction of his Congregation into Austria. He was about to witness the restoration and reflowering of a vigorous branch of the Congregation — a branch so sturdy that it was soon to become the main stem of the Congregation throughout the world!

CHAPTER II

ASSISTANT PRIEST AT THE ITALIAN CHURCH UNTIL JULY, 1813 — THE SCHLEGEL CIRCLE — ADAM MUELLER

JOHN CLEMENT HOFBAUER . . . at the Italian Church in Vienna" — thus did the Vicar-General register in the Mass Journal at Mariazell, on July 1, 1810. He continued his humble labor at this post until July, 1813. Very little is known of his priestly activity during these years. Very probably, he appeared in the pulpit only at irregular intervals, and occasionally rendered assistance in one or another of the churches in the suburbs. The number of his penitents, however, constantly increased.

For the time being he abandoned all plans that had reference to the future of the Congregation. The dawn of better times seemed farther and farther away. From 1810 to 1812, Napoleon was at the height of his glory. Barring the political struggles in Spain, Europe was at peace. In spite of this fact, Hofbauer no longer thought of attempting to establish new foundations within the limits of Napoleon's empire. The Nuncio Severoli now came forward with an entirely new mission-plan for the Redemptorist Fathers. He proposed to recommend a number of the Fathers who were at this time residing in Switzerland, to Monsignor Ferreri, Bishop of Nicapolis (Bucharest), for the missions in Wallachia. This plan, however, received little encouragement from the Vicar-General. He was not in favor of dispersing his subjects yet more; he wished rather to keep them together, so as to have them within reach for the foundation of a larger convent.

Hofbauer's circle of friends, which grew very rapidly during this period, deserves a somewhat more extended notice here. Among the first of his new acquaintances, the names of Frederick and Dorothy Schlegel must be set down.

Frederick Schlegel was born in Hanover in the year 1772. He is known in German literature as "The Prince of the

Romanticists," for he was the actual founder of the Romanticist School of writers. The ideals which this school advocated, eventually led many of its disciples who followed those ideals consistently, into the true fold of the Catholic Church. Schlegel was endowed with an ardent, restless temperament, and his youthful years were not wholly without moral blemish. His turbulent spirits began to subside and settle only after his meeting with Dorothy, the daughter of the Jewish philosopher Mendelssohn. His first relations even with her, as one might have expected, were not entirely in accord with the Christian laws of morality. When he first learned to know her, she was living in Berlin, the wife of the banker Veit. Veit was a cold, austere business man, whose whole character and make-up utterly failed to thrill the more ardent nature of the gifted young woman he had taken to wife. The brilliant and talented Schlegel, on the contrary, almost immediately struck a responsive chord in her soul, and called forth her unstinted admiration. She procured a divorce from her husband, and cast her lot, without going through the formality of a legal marriage, with Schlegel. In 1804, they were married in Paris, after Dorothy had been baptized as a Protestant. For several years thereafter they resided at Cologne, where, on April 16, 1808, after a long search for the truth and an equally long struggle against the impulse of divine grace, they both made their profession of the Catholic faith in the Cathedral of Cologne. Their marriage was blessed and ratified on the strength of the so-called Pauline privilege, and two days after their entrance into the Church they received their First Holy Communion. In the summer of this same year Frederick came to Vienna to work in the libraries of that city until such time as he could secure a permanent position. Dorothy followed him to Vienna later, arriving there on October 31, 1808. Hofbauer's advent in Vienna fell within this time. Among others who particularly interested themselves in Schlegel, Penckler is especially to be mentioned. In March, 1809, Schlegel obtained a position at Court as Secretary of the Chancellor of State. During the war he had to reside at the Military Headquarters, and it was there that he wrote his powerful philippics against Napoleon. Before leaving Vienna at the outbreak of

the war, Schlegel, probably through the good offices of Penckler, had formed an intimate friendship with Hofbauer; and when Dorothy wrote to her husband at Headquarters on May 2, she sent him, besides the good wishes of Gentz, Penckler, Collin, and Hormayr, also the cordial greetings of Father Hofbauer.

Schlegel thus had the rare good fortune, immediately after his conversion, of coming in contact with a priest in whom the Catholic ideal of life shone forth with singular splendor. Converts but too often meet with disappointment in this very respect. Schlegel had prepared himself for such disappointment. But Hofbauer did not disappoint; for it need scarcely be said that from the very beginning the Saint sympathized with Schlegel. Of the many ways that lead to Rome, Schlegel had followed that of the historian. From his studies the great savant had acquired that proper conception of the Church and of the Papacy which is the common heritage of all Catholics in normal times, but which, at this period in the world's history, was rarely found even among the clergy of either the higher or the lower rank. In his new friend, therefore, Hofbauer had discovered one more proof of what he had always maintained — namely, that the history and the continued existence of the Church suffice to convince any one of its divine origin.

The intimacy between Hofbauer and the Schlegels was no mere ordinary friendship. Philip Veit, a son of Dorothy's by her first marriage, tersely describes it, when he writes: "Hofbauer, as a daily guest of the family, exerted the greatest influence over Frederick and my deceased mother, both of whom surrounded him with the greatest affection and regard." The happy couple, who will always be counted among the savants of Germany, entrusted their souls to this humble priest with childlike simplicity; and, to quote a remark of Dorothy's, the Saint responded generously to this confidence, rewarding it "with a truly fatherly tenderness."

It would be interesting to know how Hofbauer guided along the way to salvation these two persons, whose spiritual life was so complex, and whose past had been agitated by so many storms. Naturally, the greater part of the story of these two

souls and their spiritual progress, is unknown to any but the all-knowing God above. In Dorothy's Diary, however, there are to be found some "Sayings of Father Hofbauer," perhaps originally uttered by way of admonition in the confessional. Because of their brevity and aptness, they probably impressed the gifted woman as sufficiently remarkable to be preserved in writing. Among these "Sayings of Father Hofbauer" we find the following: "Do not quarrel, — pray." — "It is better to speak to God about the sinner, than to speak to the sinner about God." — "God does not need our homage and service, but we do." — "All creatures were created for man; but man was created only for God." — "Christ, the Son of God, became like unto us, that we might become like unto Him."

Dorothy's biographer avers, that the soul of this woman must have been very plastic material indeed in the venerated hands of Hofbauer. "The same flame that consumed his soul," she asserts, "consumed hers also. She, like him, had no patience with half-measures: she, too, believed that nothing less than the perfect holocaust of man's entire and undivided being was a worthy offering to Christ. In the school of Hofbauer's spiritual teaching all the inclinations of her soul became more and more chastened and refined. Of her former effervescent vivaciousness, which on occasion had betrayed her into slight injustice toward those whose opinions did not accord with her own, there now remained nothing but a uniform, friendly kindliness, attracting to her even those who differed widely from her in disposition, in culture, or in religion. Her feminine condescension gradually transformed itself into the firmness of a naturally resolute character, until her whole life was dominated and regulated by the motto she had entered in her Diary: 'Enjoy everything for the honor and glory of God; deny yourself all things out of love for Him.' And under the beneficent influence of such principles and sentiments as these, she daily became to her own loved ones and to her friends more and more as oil poured out — soothing the turmoil and bustle, and calming the perturbed waters of the life about her."[1]

On his side, Hofbauer held Dorothy Schlegel in sincere and

[1] Margaret Hiemenz, *Dorothy von Schlegel* (Freiburg, 1911), p. 116.

affectionate esteem. She was, as one of her contemporaries describes her, "one of those strong women who, as models of Christian womanhood, are eminently fitted to make piety attractive in the eyes of the world: for she was herself unquestionably attractive." The Saint faithfully offered a special prayer for her every day; and if the opportunity did not present itself earlier in the day, he took care to say this prayer for her at night.

A very intimate friendship developed between Hofbauer and Frederick Schlegel. Hofbauer was wont to call Schlegel "his Frederick," while Schlegel, with like familiarity, would speak of the Saint as "old Hofbauer." These two men strongly resembled each other in their frank and somewhat brusque manner, though they otherwise differed widely in character. Frederick Schlegel in some respects was far removed from the ideal of Christian manhood. His contemporaries repeatedly, and not always over-delicately, remark that Schlegel was a very hearty eater; but that he was so, no man of sound judgment who remembers Schlegel's powerful physique and his extraordinary mental activity, will take amiss. Less pardonable was his egotism, so frequently a source of suffering to the faithful and self-sacrificing Dorothy. As spiritual director, Hofbauer always followed the principle: "We must first take a good look at a man before deciding of what he is capable." In all likelihood, he judged and treated his friend Frederick according to this principle. In the spiritual life of such a man as Schlegel, the fascination of human science and the temptation to plunge unreservedly into its depths, constitutes a more real danger than the human weaknesses just alluded to. Here especially did Hofbauer place a restraining hand upon his friend. An incident which, haply, has come down to us, shows that the Saint did not hesitate to warn the great savant of this danger. On one occasion Schlegel read to him one of his latest literary productions. Hofbauer listened attentively. When the reading had come to an end, he commended the author's efforts in characteristic fashion. "Well done, Frederick, well done!" said he; "but," he added, "it is better still to love Our Lord Jesus Christ." But Schlegel rarely needed such reminders: the "one thing necessary" the keen mind of

Schlegel grasped and understood with ever-increasing clearness, as his later life amply proves. It is not unusual for men of Schlegel's stamp to yield to the temptation of neglecting certain duties which the Church imposes upon her children. Schlegel was not one of these. In receiving the Holy Sacraments he went beyond the requirements of the Church; in fact, as time passed, he became a pioneer in the practice of the frequent reception of Holy Communion.[2]

Dorothy Schlegel did not rest until her two sons, Jonas and Philip Veit, were at her side in Vienna. At the time, they were pursuing their studies at the Academy of Arts in Dresden. Both still belonged to the Jewish religion in which they were born, although in spirit they were very close to Christianity. Their mother urged them to interrupt their studies for a brief interval, and to prepare to take the final step toward the Church in Vienna. Here, she assured them, they would find men who would not merely interest themselves in the matter of their conversion, but would prove themselves the staunchest of friends for life. They yielded at last to the entreaties of their mother, and came to Vienna in 1810. Hofbauer himself undertook their instruction. What these two young men learned from Hofbauer, they never forgot. Later, as an old man of seventy years, Philip Veit gratefully recalled Father Hofbauer's patient efforts in their behalf. "Although I received a little preliminary instruction in the faith from a Catholic priest in Cologne, it was nevertheless chiefly from Father Hofbauer, that admirable, never-to-be-forgotten servant of God, that my elder brother and I received our instruction in the Catholic religion, and it was under his guiding hand that we made ready for the reception of Holy Baptism. His zeal in our behalf and his interest in us were unwearying. Would to God that I had realized at the time how deeply he was interested in my eternal welfare, and had profited by it! Only

[2] Referring to the great change that had taken place in Schlegel since his conversion, Finke remarks: "Schlegel's quarrelsome disposition has disappeared; his haughty tone of former years is vanishing. His constant desire for peace and quiet, which some may attribute to his physical condition, is surely nothing but the fruit of his religious experiences. The antipathy of his brother and of his other opponents wounds him indeed, but he brushes it aside, and refuses now to let it annoy him." (*Frederick and Dorothy Schlegel,* p. 25.)

later did I realize in a measure how often I had perhaps grieved him by my carelessness." On June 9, 1810, the eve of Pentecost, Philip received the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Eucharist in the quiet little Chapel of the Nunciature from the hand of Severoli. Jonas, who had come to Vienna somewhat later than his brother, at his baptism by Severoli, on July 26, took the name of John. His godfather was Count Frederick Leopold Stolberg. Philip returned to Dresden in October, but came back to Vienna early in the following year, and began to work for himself. John remained in Vienna until the beginning of 1811, when he set out for Rome, thereafter making his home in the Eternal City. Dorothy Schlegel, in one of her letters, humorously describes the disorder and excitement which marked the farewell celebration preceding John's departure, who, "true to himself, had put off the packing of his effects till the last moment; there was a constant coming and going; and in the midst of it all were Father Hofbauer and Martin; in a word, there was such excitement as one will seldom witness anywhere."

The home of the Schlegels soon became the rendezvous for a large circle of friends. The list of regular visitors here includes the names of many who achieved fame and greatness. Not only Schlegel, but his wife Dorothy as well, was the attraction here. The secret of her charm was not her external appearance, for in this respect she possessed very little advantage over other women living in the city. "She could boast of no extraordinary beauty of countenance . . . only her dark fiery eyes transfigured her otherwise plain and ordinary features. In those eyes there lay a world of spirit and kindliness which invariably drew everything under her spell, although the desire to attract or to conquer was ever farthest from her thoughts and intentions."[3] "Persons who had attained literary fame, when visiting Vienna, did not easily pass by the Schlegel home without entering." . . . "Indeed, at times it seemed as if all the Romanticists had been recalled from the four quarters of the globe and foregathered in Vienna by special appointment."[4]

"Very many strangers come here, especially from Berlin,

[3] Hiemenz, *Dorothy von Schlegel*, p. 112. [4] *Ibid.*, p. 113.

Silesia, and Hamburg," Dorothy wrote to Rome, in 1811, " and we have many visitors." Not a few of these guests of the Schlegels carried back with them into their daily life the words that they had heard from the Saint's lips and the examples he had set before them. During the War of Independence, Philip Veit, then serving in the field, wrote to Dorothy of a certain Lehmann of Berlin: " He esteems Father Hofbauer and his teachings more than I imagined. Be sure to tell Father Hofbauer this; it will please him, I am sure."

Several of Schlegel's circle, moreover, came into even closer relationship with Hofbauer. Of a certain Herr Czerny, who succumbed to a very painful illness, in 1814, Dorothy wrote to her son John: " When he realized that his end was approaching, he expressed a desire to make the acquaintance of Father Hofbauer. His request was granted, and he was so impressed by what he heard and saw, that he requested Father Hofbauer to visit him frequently. He made his confession to him and experienced the greatest happiness and consolation when he received the Last Sacraments from his hands. His widow, however, is inconsolable in her bereavement." Here Dorothy adds a remark which is not quite clear to us. " Wonders have occurred to strengthen and console the poor woman," she says; " but the poor soul, taken utterly by surprise by these remarkable happenings, did not know how to turn them to her lifelong comfort. She witnessed them as if in a dream, and they left her almost entirely unimpressed."

It was likewise as a member of this Schlegel circle that Fräulein Nina Hartl, a young woman noted for her beauty and talent no less than for her refinement and attractive character, found a spiritual guide in Father Hofbauer. She was the adopted daughter of the Councilor Hartl, who at that time was the director of the two theaters at Court and of the theater in Vienna. With the passing days, she came to cling to Dorothy Schlegel with childlike affection. In spite of her social surroundings and her ability to move with perfect ease in the highest social circles, this highly-cultured girl was more inclined to a retired life — an inclination which, under Hofbauer's guidance, was not a little strengthened. Instead of visiting the theater, she preferred to spend her evenings with the Schlegels,

lavishing upon Dorothy all the attention and affection of a devoted daughter. During these evening hours, Schlegel's home became the rendezvous of a great company of friends. There, as Caroline Pichler remarks, they found a sociable gathering and an atmosphere that was never marred by affectation. The Schlegels were not rich; they were unable to afford either extravagance or elegance; but the very limitations which their circumstances placed upon them, gave to these gatherings "a peculiar charm of at-homeness and cordial welcome." Hofbauer was, as it were, the unofficial chaplain of the Schlegel home, and that he knew well how to mingle with the company he invariably met there, is evident from a short entry which the young Joseph von Eichendorff made in his diary on February 3, 1812: "This evening I visited the Schlegels, where I met only Dorothy, Philip and Eggers, and Baron Buhle. . . . Later on Schlegel's Confessor arrived with another priest. He is the General of some Order, speaks Polish, is full of fire, and very cheerful, etc. After his departure, we found that he had left behind him a pound-cake, which we enjoyed with our wine. Evidently Madame Schlegel had previously told him about us."

The Countess Julia Zichy, the most charming woman of Vienna's nobility at that time, likewise belonged to Schlegel's circle of friends. "In her," a certain writer declares, "were blended the purest ideals of womanhood with the greatest beauty of person; the highest culture and education here expressed themselves in terms of genuine virtue and innocence." [5] She was one of Hofbauer's most faithful penitents, and it was probably through him that she became acquainted with the Schlegels. The Countess thenceforth evinced the liveliest interest in the fortunes of this family. In Dorothy she found a friend, whose culture and character were very similar to her own, and the two women were soon bound to each other in the warmest sort of friendship. Philip Veit considered it a high honor to be permitted to transfer to his canvas the beautiful, Madonna-like features of the lovable Countess.

Besides these two women, Nina Hartl and Julia Zichy, two men, both belonging to the Romanticists of those days, who

[5] Varnhagen von Ense, quoted by Bleyer, p. 13.

made the acquaintance of Hofbauer at Schlegel's home, became true ornaments of his parish. One day during the year 1811, Schlegel appeared at the Italian church with a young friend just arrived from Vienna, whom he wished to introduce to Hofbauer. This was no other than Frederick Klinkowstroem, a scion of the nobility of Pomerania. Born in the parental castle of Ludwigsburg near Stralsund in the year 1778, he had, after a brief career in the military service at Danzig, taken up the study of art. From 1802 to 1809, he devoted himself to his profession in the Art Gallery at Dresden. For two years thereafter he resided in Paris. At this time, Joseph von Pilat, a native of Augsburg, was sojourning temporarily at Paris, having come over from Vienna as Private Secretary to Metternich. Klinkowstroem became acquainted with him and his charming family. He became interested in Pilat's sister-in-law, Fräulein Louise von Mengershausen, of Goettingen, and eventually asked her hand in marriage. After their engagement he went to Rome. A few months later he settled in Vienna, whither his betrothed had preceded him with Pilat's family.[6]

Klinkowstroem's son Alphonsus, who wrote an interesting biography of his father, claimed that no one understood Hofbauer better than his father. Be that as it may, it is undoubtedly true that of all the men with whom Hofbauer came in contact in Vienna, none labored more successfully in the support of the Saint's efforts than Klinkowstroem. These two men co-operated with each other so harmoniously and so sympathetically, that their friendship must be set down as a merciful disposition of Divine Providence.

When Schlegel arrived at the Italian Church with his young friend, Hofbauer was just conducting the Vesper services. Waiting with Schlegel in the sacristy for the conclusion of the services, the young artist little dreamed that an unusual surprise was in store for him. As a young officer at Danzig

[6] The Mengershausens were originally from Goettingen. Five daughters of this family settled in Vienna, four of them entering the Church later on. Of these four, two, Juliana and Dorothy, took the veil of the Salesian nuns in Gleink. The father, too, George Christopher von Mengershausen, spent the last years of his life in Vienna, making his home with his son-in-law Klinkowstroem.

he had witnessed a strange occurrence which until this moment had continued to puzzle and bewilder him. Some friends had taken him, one evening, to a dance-hall of very questionable character. A woman of low morals had been sent for and had just entered the place, when Klinkowstroem, on looking up, beheld behind her the figure of an unknown priest clad in the sacred vestments. The apparition as it passed silently through the hall seemed by look and gesture to be warning him of the danger that was imminent. This strange occurrence saved the young officer in the hour of peril. He rose at once, and in confusion rushed from the hall. So vividly had the apparition impressed itself upon his imagination, however, that on reaching home he was able to paint it from memory. Years had passed since then; but when Hofbauer, wearing the stole and surplice, entered the sacristy after the services, Klinkowstroem immediately recognized in him the figure of the apparition. Every detail of feature and of dress, even to the embroidery on the stole, corresponded with the apparition on that never-to-be-forgotten night in Danzig, and with the painting he had made of it. That painting was still in his possession. The singular occurrence was a frequent topic of conversation in the Schlegel circle. A detailed account of it is given in the Memoirs of Dr. John Ringseis, later a celebrated physician, who, coming to Vienna as a young student of medicine in 1812, frequently met Father Hofbauer at the home of the Schlegels.

Klinkowstroem, brought up in strict Protestantism, had kept himself immune from the indifferentism of so many of his co-religionists. But the Protestant creed brought no peace, no satisfaction to his inquiring, seeking, struggling soul. His mind was constantly occupied with religious questions. "That a man so religiously inclined," writes his son, "that a mind so constantly and sincerely in search of the truth, should be unable indefinitely to withstand the appeal of the Catholic Church, and should eventually arrive within the portals of that Church, is a fact of so frequent occurrence, that no one but those who deliberately close their eyes to the ordinary course of events will question or deny it." [7] Nevertheless, the acquaintance

[7] Klinkowstroem, p. 277.

which Klinkowstroem formed with Hofbauer became for him the determining factor in his return to the true Church. "It was equally inevitable," writes Klinkowstroem again, "that once Klinkowstroem had met Father Hofbauer, and once these two men, though placed in different walks of life, had come to understand each other, the conversion of the former became a foregone conclusion. It required no particular sharpness of vision to foresee that such would be the outcome of such a meeting, nor was any extraordinary impelling force needed from without to bring about such a result. . . . Do not talk to me here of proselytism and Jesuitism," Alphonsus von Klinkowstroem goes on to say. "If a man does not wish to hear anything of the compelling power of divine grace, to him I say: 'Picture to yourself a moral law of gravitation, and you will without difficulty understand how he that is strong in the faith will attract to himself him that is weaker.'" [8]

In his new-found friend Klinkowstroem discovered what he had hitherto recognized as a regrettable, painful lack in the religious circles about him. He had found a minister of religion who was thoroughly conscious of his dignity as a priest. "Even as the nobility becomes despised, because so many noble men and women become debased, so likewise religion has been cast aside by many as an unprofitable branch, because so many priests fail to realize their exalted dignity." The artist, more than any other, is apt to be powerfully moved by this point of view, for he more than others expects from those who are called to be the representatives of religion, a complete harmony of external conduct with the internal convictions of faith which they preach and profess. How seriously Hofbauer regarded the dignity of the sacred priesthood, Klinkowstroem had occasion to learn to his own regret. One evening, when he was still a Protestant, he made some disrespectful remark about some religious subject to those about him. Hofbauer at once rebuked him, saying: "Sir, what you speak of so lightly, has cost the shedding of much blood, and that the most precious blood."

It was not until three years after his advent to Vienna that Klinkowstroem was finally convinced of the truth, and, acting

[8] Klinkowstroem, p. 278.

upon that conviction, made his submission to the Church. For some time, however, he kept his entrance into the true fold a profound secret. To the inquiries of his intended bride, who was a devout Protestant, he replied that his frequent attendance at the services in the Catholic Church was to be accounted for by his love for fine church-music. While still a Protestant, Klinkowstroem was induced by a friend, in 1812, to lend his support and co-operation to a great Catholic movement. This friend was none other than Adam Mueller — the second of the two men previously alluded to as prominent members of the Schlegel circle.

Adam Mueller, born at Berlin, in 1779, was the most versatile genius among the Romanticists of that period: he could lay claim at once to the titles of philosopher, natural scientist, professor of civil law, political economist, theologian, artist, and litterateur; but he was above all an eminent historian. He had grown to manhood imbued with the spirit of the Protestant "Illuminati." As a student at Goettingen, he began to study Edmund Burke's volume against the French Revolution. This work had just appeared from the press and almost immediately created a great sensation. The reading of this book proved the turning-point in Mueller's religious development. Penetrating even more deeply than Burke himself into the spirit of the Middle Ages, he triumphantly escaped from the errors of the so-called "Illuminati," and arrived at the conviction that only the ever-youthful energy of a historic, unchanging Christianity could stem the advancing tide of destruction which threatened civilization. And this historic, unchanging energy of Apostolic Christianity he found only in the Catholic Church. He took up his abode on the estate of a friend in Prussian Poland. There, in total seclusion from the world, he devoted himself to his studies and to his own spiritual development, waiting for the moment when his resolution to join the Church should reach maturity. That moment came in April, 1805, and he lost no time in actually carrying the resolution into effect. He was received into the true fold in the Church of the Servites in Vienna. Thereafter he always celebrated the anniversary of his conversion as the happiest day of his life. From 1806 to 1809, he labored as a man of letters at Dresden,

where he became acquainted with Klinkowstroem. In 1811, after an unsuccessful attempt to obtain permanent employment in Berlin, he came to Vienna. Here the youthful and devout Archduke Maximilian d'Este took an interest in him, and gave him a home in his own palace. In May, 1812, Mueller gave a course of lectures at the Palace on "Eloquence," which were enthusiastically received, especially by members of the nobility. At this time Archduke Max was contemplating the establishment of an Institute, which should have for its specific object the education of the sons of the nobility according to strictly Catholic principles. In Adam Mueller he believed he had found the man best fitted for the execution of this enterprise. By the mid-year of 1812, all preliminary arrangements for the undertaking had been completed. Mueller, who was to draw up the plan of the Institute and be its director, then approached Hofbauer and asked him to assume the spiritual direction of the Institute. Hofbauer needed no persuasion: he consented with pleasure. An Educational Institute for the nobility, especially if it lived up to the motto which Mueller proposed for it — "Christianity in Its All-Embracing Power" — would, he believed, prove the best means of arousing the leading circles of society from their religious lethargy, and provide an excellent means of setting aright the ruptured relations between the Church and the State of Austria. The capital required for the furtherance of this enterprise was furnished by the Archduke, who, not long since, had inherited a considerable fortune from his uncle, the Archduke Max Francis. Baron Penckler also became interested in the undertaking, toward the success of which, in his position as a member of the Imperial Commission on Studies, he was able to contribute not a little.

There seemed to be no reason to doubt that the Government would readily grant the necessary permission for the establishment of the new Institute, as it seldom refused its approbation to private institutions of this kind. Besides, suitable schools for the nobility were by no means numerous at the time. The Archduke, therefore, had no hesitation in acquiring the Károlyi Palace on the Wieden, which was at once fitted up in princely fashion, and in securing the faculty for the new Institute. All

this was done before the Government had been approached and petitioned for its approbation. Klinkowstroem was appointed Assistant Director and Professor of Drawing and Painting. As the prospective son-in-law of Pilat, he enjoyed great influence with Metternich, and this fact was sufficient to recommend him. For Klinkowstroem himself the appointment proved a genuine relief, inasmuch as it provided him with a definite means of livelihood, and helped him realize his heart's dearest desire. In November, 1812, he brought Louise, now his wife, to the Károlyi Palace, where he had been assigned a place of abode. Joseph von Eichendorff, too, obtained a place on the faculty; and Hofbauer summoned Fathers Sabelli and Forthuber from Switzerland to fill positions as Instructors in Religion. They arrived in Vienna during the first days of February, 1813, both in good health, and unspeakably happy at seeing their Superior again after so many years of cruel separation.[9] They, too, now made their home in the Károlyi Palace.

While the Palace and its surroundings were being made ready for the future Institute, Hofbauer frequently visited the place. Stohl, as chief overseer, was in charge of the work. His son Francis, then a lad of fourteen, has left us an interesting account of the impression the Saint made upon him. "I often knelt to kiss Father Hofbauer's hand," he writes, "and he in turn would kiss me on the cheek, saying, 'Be a good boy.' In fancy I can still picture him vividly before me, and can hear the accents of his sweet, pleasing voice. It is quite probable that Father Hofbauer's coming was always announced beforehand to those then living in the house; for, whenever he arrived, Mueller, von Klinkowstroem, and the three Fathers — Stark, Sabelli, and Forthuber — were on hand in the courtyard to welcome him, and each knelt in turn before him to receive his blessing. This appeared very strange to me at the time; for I was under the impression that one

[9] On their journey to Vienna, a list of addresses of certain friends and benefactors of Hofbauer's, which was found in their possession, created suspicion, and was taken from them in Munich. Montgelas thought the matter sufficiently important to send these addresses to the French ambassador at Munich, since they showed, he said, "how extensive were the relations of this Congregation." (*Government Archives in Munich.*)

knelt down only before the Blessed Sacrament, and that, except from the altar, no one but the Archbishop gave the blessing. The fact is, that I had never witnessed anything like this scene before. I noticed, however, that Father Hofbauer always accepted this voluntary act of reverence as naturally as a father might accept it from his children — always in a genuinely simple, unostentatious, matter-of-fact sort of way — as if he paid no particular attention to it. And in fact, the external appearance of Hofbauer was in no way in keeping with these extraordinary marks of esteem and reverence which were bestowed upon him. He was always neatly clad, but his garments, made of dark-blue cloth worn threadbare, were plain and almost poor; he wore rough shoes with heavy soles; his figure was somewhat bent forward under his old, broad-brimmed, turned-up, felt hat; he was perpetually cheerful and friendly; his voice was cast in gentle accents, and he moved about with a playful smile on his face. None of these things would have marked him as a commanding personage. And yet, in spite of all this seeming insignificance, there was withal something quite unusual and impressive about this worthy man of the simple, captivating smile and the sweet, lisping voice." The writer of these lines declares that he regarded Father Hofbauer as a living saint. Daily now the Saint visited the Károlyi Palace, usually arriving toward evening and spending several hours after supper with the Klinkowstroem family. Klinkowstroem speaks of these visits in his reminiscences of Hofbauer. " In this company," he tells us, " which as yet did not fully appreciate the grandeur of his character, the Saint was remarkably cheerful and always delightfully communicative. Invariably his conversation turned to the spread of religion, the exaltation of the Church of God, and the manner of leading a fervent, practical Catholic life. He was wont to snatch a little rest there on the floor or on an old sofa, and by daybreak he had already returned to the city."

Like Schlegel's home, the Károlyi Palace now became the rendezvous of these friends and their acquaintances, with this difference that here the personal magnetism of those residing there was enhanced by the beauty of the edifice and the charm of its surroundings. Clement Brentano, who came to Vienna

during the summer of 1813,[10] in a letter written to Tieck within two days after his arrival, had this to say of his visit to Adam Mueller: "We all dined together in the grand dining-hall. It was a motley gathering that I met there, made up as it was of learned men from the North, priests from the South, and attractive women with their small children. Most of those present engaged in a spirited discussion of the sermon they had heard that morning. The whole scene, set amid such magnificent surroundings, made a strange impression upon me: it presented to my soul, which is not over-sensitive to spiritual values, and which for the nonce was removed from the distractions of the outer world, a singular picture of the world of to-day. Nevertheless, I spent there an exceptionally pleasant day." This poet, who was a Catholic in name, but estranged from God and the Church, soon felt himself so much at home in the thoroughly Catholic atmosphere of this house, that he visited there almost every day. In his letters, he often speaks of the circle of friends that he met there. On one occasion he wrote: "These magnificent halls, this courtyard shaded by chestnut-trees, these elegant apartments, these lovely terraces, beautiful flower-beds, and limpid ponds set like gems among the distant mountains, canopied under clear skies and circumscribed by an atmosphere filled with the harmony of bells ringing in tune, encompass and surround a peace so gentle and restful, a life so pure and sincere, and good wishes so pious and unselfish, that I should wish to remain here forever." "Hidden, unsuspected chords were struck in the soul of this poet, and they continued to respond to the touch of these simple beauties with soft and low murmurs, until their separate sounds, like converging streams, united and burst forth into the accord of one overpowering, irresistible tidal wave of song." The wish with which Brentano had come to Vienna — that his soul might be led "to some holy isle," was not left entirely unfulfilled.[11] Impressed by what he had heard and seen, urged

[10] See Diel-Kreiten, *Clement Brentano,* I. p. 388.

[11] Hofbauer probably met the unhappy poet frequently at Schlegel's and at Mueller's. A police-report, dated Vienna, 1815, contains the following: "Two years ago, that is to say, in 1813, there lived here one Clement Brentano, a man of letters, who produced his tragedy *Valeria* in the Theater near the Castle. It was a dismal failure, so that the performance was hardly given

onward to the pursuit of higher and nobler and more permanent values, he left Vienna, and a few years later found his way safely back to God and to the Church.

At the Institute everything had been carefully arranged, and all was now in readiness for this new educational project; but the Institute could not be opened. "Ignorance and hatred toward priests," wrote Brentano to Tieck, "began to wage a terrible war against the whole enterprise." Mueller's plan, no doubt, had its defects, to which some exception might justly be taken; but no ear was given to proposals for remedying these defects. What raised opposition to Mueller was his point of view: it was thoroughly Catholic. This was true at least of the opposition of his chief antagonist, the Vice-Director of the Study of Philosophy, Michael Gruber, Canon of St. Stephen's.[12] Adam Mueller, with his simple, childlike faith, on the one hand, and the "enlightened," near-infidel Canon, on the other, are both bound up with the history of that period. Schlegel was not wrong, when before his conversion he wrote,

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in full. A few days later Hofbauer went to him, and apologizing for intruding, said: 'You have sought worldly honor and perhaps emolument from your tragedy. You have not succeeded in attaining either, and perhaps you feel dejected over your failure. I sympathize with you, as do also a number of other persons. I have been commissioned by them to give you this trifle (about 100 florins), and to beg you for your confidence, etc.' Brentano declined the gift, and there the matter rested." This last remark may be true, for Brentano was hardly in straitened circumstances. On the other hand, the account of the same incident in the *Rhenish Antiquarius* may also be true, which in concluding says: "In all the vicissitudes that followed, there remained in the mind of Brentano an indelible impression of the venerable, benevolent figure of his visitor, who had proffered this gift." (See Eckardt, *Hofbauer,* p. 83.)

[12] Gruber, a hunchbacked little man with pointed red nose and severe, unpolished ways, was a striking figure in Vienna in those days. As chaplain of the Imperial Embassy in London, he had come in contact with men of deistic tendencies and, as Sebastian Brunner remarks, "had brought the bull-dog English rationalistic deism home with him as a souvenir of his journey." What this ecclesiastical dignitary thought of the conviction of faith may be seen from the following incident. As chairman of an examination in Religion, Gruber displayed his unbelief in a scandalous manner by his cynical smile while the question of the eternity of the torments of hell was being treated. The examining professor had the courage to take hold of the cross which the Canon wore on his breast, and to tell him to his face: "Reverend Sir, you have probably never deserved this pectoral cross." The professor had to suffer for his temerity: he was deprived of his position and transferred to a country parish. (Brunner, *Hofbauer,* p. 135.)

that the converts to the faith must bring new life and vigor into the "moribund laxity and torpor" of the Catholic world. It will not be hard to surmise Gruber's opinion of Mueller: he spared not even the private life of Mueller in his scathing denunciations of his thoroughly Catholic opponent. Baron von Penckler was the only man on the Imperial Commission on Studies who stood up resolutely in defense of Mueller; but his courageous efforts were entirely without success.[13]

The petition for the approbation of the Institute was, accordingly, rejected by the Emperor. "The Muellereum" is going to pieces, remarked Schlegel in a letter written toward the end of September. This collapse of an enterprise begun so auspiciously proved a bitter disappointment to Hofbauer; for his friend Mueller it was the source of not a little embarrassment. As he wrote later to Gentz, "at this time, when the Castle, now doomed by its enemies, threatens to go to pieces, I am frequently obliged to scrape for the miserable pittance that will carry me over the following day and help me support the thirty living beings now depending upon me for their sustenance." It may have been during these days of want, that Hofbauer came to Mueller's assistance, as he is reported to have done on one occasion, by forwarding him a large sum of money. The dissolution of the Institute was hastened when Austria joined in the war against Napoleon, as most of the men connected with it went into the field.

[13] Gruber's opinion and the rest of the acts of the entire process relating to the Institute, are now published as an Appendix to the work, *Adam H. Mueller: The Elements of Statecraft*, by Dr. Jacob Baxa (Vienna, 1922), Vol. II. pp. 460 sqq. Speaking of Gruber's opinion of Adam Mueller, Baxa says: "The judgment of the Vice-Director Gruber is the most severe and most unjust that has ever been passed upon Adam Mueller. The dominant characteristics of the Vice-Director are clearly discernible in this judgment: meanness, pettiness, malice, and loquacity — all these find a place in the make-up of this man. He is an eloquent advocate for the 'Illuminati,' and an equally eloquent advocate of that typical Philistinism which can endure everything save genuine largeness of vision. Gruber's opinion seems to have been the deciding factor in the case, and to him belongs the questionable glory of having brought to naught this promising educational project." (Pp. 480 sq.)

CHAPTER III

THE FIRST YEAR AT ST. URSULA'S (1813–1814) — CONVERSIONS

IN the meantime a change had come into the life of the Saint. Ever since December, 1812, he had been taking the place of the ex-Jesuit Father Kiffer, who had fallen ill, as Spiritual Director of the Ursulines. Kiffer died on April 3, 1813. Archbishop Hohenwart thereupon officially appointed Hofbauer Spiritual Director of the Nuns and also Director of their church. In recording this fact, the annalist of St. Ursula's says: "On July 18, 1813, Father Hofbauer took possession of the house of our deceased confessor, Father Kiffer. He is being provided with everything that our former confessors usually received, with the exception of the wine." From this we deduce, that Hofbauer still remained faithful to the habit of abstaining from wine — an act of self-denial to which he had accustomed himself from childhood.

Notwithstanding these new duties, he still continued in charge of the Italian Church, now assuming practically complete control, for Father Caselli, in consequence of an accident, was soon confined to his room. Father Stark, who had been raised to the priesthood by the Nuncio in 1810, still resided in the old dwelling known as "the Welsh House." Forthuber and Sabelli stayed on at the Károlyi Palace for some time after the collapse of the Institute there, at the expense of the Archduke Maximilian. Father Forthuber, being still young, with a view to completing his ecclesiastical training, attended the pedagogical and catechetical classes at the normal school of St. Anne, while the linguist Sabelli now became Hofbauer's secretary.

The house into which Hofbauer moved in July, 1813, is no longer standing at this writing. It was a narrow, three-story building, rented from the Ursulines. It was situated in the so-called "Seilerstaette," opposite the convent, and adjoining the "Eiserne Birne." The two rooms on the second floor, the

larger one having two windows and the smaller but one window, were the Saint's last home on earth. Later he occupied also the two rooms in the third story. Marianne, the pious and faithful out-servant of the Ursulines, brought him his meals in a basket from the convent-kitchen.

The duties connected with his new position were not overtaxing, and did not require either much time or much labor. As spiritual director of the nuns, he had to hear their confessions every week; it was not customary for the confessor to give them conferences; neither did the task of giving the Instructions in Christian Doctrine to the pupils of the boarding-school conducted by the nuns, fall to his lot; for this duty was entrusted to others. The services in the church were even less taxing. Since the days of Joseph II, only a few sermons were preached here in the course of the entire year. Besides, the Director of the church had as his Assistant a secular priest, who made his home in the first story of the house. Nevertheless, the Saint's assignment to St. Ursula's was the most important turning-point in his entire career as a priest. St. Ursula's became the real center of his apostolate in Vienna. He now had a church of his own. True, the Josephist regulations were still in force, and greatly restricted his zealous activities; but many of these regulations were either half forgotten, or were connived at and no longer so strictly observed. This being the case, he was able without much risk to re-introduce the regular Sunday sermon. On the very first Sunday after entering upon his new duties, as he waited in the sacristy to begin the services, he asked why the bells were not rung for the sermon. "Because there is to be no sermon," he was told. "Indeed!" he rejoined; "but I intend to preach; so, be good enough to ring the bells." And to the amazement of the nuns, he ascended the pulpit that morning and preached a sermon to the half dozen people that were present. When it became noised abroad that Hofbauer was preaching regularly at St. Ursula's, a change for the better was soon apparent. The convent-church, which was not very large, was thereafter filled to capacity on Sundays; and the Saint thus gradually became better known to persons who previously had scarcely heard his name. The first years of seclusion were now over; and the

attractive power of his personality began marvelously to assert itself. Soon the throngs of penitents that came to him grew so numerous, that he was compelled to hear confessions daily in the sacristy of the convent-church, and that till a late hour in the morning. During these last years of his life, he burdened himself with strenuous work indeed. We are told that he arose very early every morning — never later than four o'clock; and some say that he was frequently about at a much earlier hour. So as to ensure his rising on time, he had instructed the night-watchman to awaken him; and this good man would knock so violently at the shutters of Hofbauer's room, that the nuns in the convent across the street were at times quite frightened. After his meditation, the Saint repaired to the confessional, where he remained as long as there were any who wished to receive the sacrament of penance. It was usually ten o'clock or later, when he could go to the altar to offer the Holy Sacrifice. With the celebration of Holy Mass, the morning was almost over. This was his daily routine, except on two days in the week, when at an early hour he proceeded to the church of the Mechitarists, about a half-hour's journey distant, carrying with him bread and other gifts for the poor, who gathered there on those days. During the winter months, he invariably found a number of women from the suburbs waiting for him at the outer castle-gate, who, with lanterns to light the way, would then accompany him to the church "at the Platzl." His penitents "at the Platzl" stood high in the esteem of Hofbauer. He used to say, that whenever he desired to obtain any particular grace or favor, he would beg these good souls to remember his intentions in prayer at their Holy Communion. After hearing confessions "at the Platzl," he would return to St. Ursula's and to his daily duties there. His many excursions into the city and to the suburbs for the purpose of visiting friends and benefactors, the poor, the sick, and the dying, consumed his afternoons and most of the evenings. Frequently during these years he might be seen, his big mantle thrown about him, a cloth cap on his head, and a small lantern in his hand, hastening at a late hour in the night to the bedside of some dying person in a distant suburb. But we must refrain from recounting here in detail the pastoral labors of

this true apostle, on fire with the love of his God and of his neighbor. In the ensuing chapters we shall endeavor to describe the last years of his life in chronological order, and, as far as this is possible, in connection with the history of the times; for, from this time forward, his career is no longer marked by any noteworthy epochs.

The first year of the Saint's labors at St. Ursula's is coincident with the great period of the War of Independence. After Austria, in August, 1813, had aligned itself with the other nations in the war against Napoleon, the social circles of Vienna were for the most part deserted and unmarked by any sort of activity. Many of Hofbauer's friends also quitted the capital at this time. Schlegel and Klinkowstroem were summoned to the Austrian Headquarters; as early as the month of April, Philip Veit had joined the foresters of Luetzow, and Eichendorff soon followed his example. Adam Mueller accepted Roschmann's invitation to come to the Tyrol, where he entered the service of the Emperor as Commissary and Major of the Archers. His wife remained for the time being in Vienna, and busied herself with bringing order out of the chaos following the dissolution of the Institute in the Károlyi Palace. It was probably at some time during this period that Hofbauer received her into the Church; for hitherto she had continued to profess Protestantism. As she herself relates, she hesitated to take the final step toward Catholicism, because she dreaded the thought of making her first confession to Father Hofbauer, imagining that he would impose a very severe penance upon her. But the penance which he gave her proved to be so slight, that she herself begged for a more severe one. Hofbauer refused to add anything else, assuring her that God would provide for anything that might be lacking. Before the day had ended, she was afflicted with a violent toothache, and, remembering Father Hofbauer's words, she cheerfully accepted this annoyance as the extra penance which he had hinted at.

Hofbauer followed his friends into the war with his prayers and good wishes. Dorothy Schlegel, in her letters to her son Philip, frequently sent greetings from the Saint. On one occasion she wrote: "Father Hofbauer and Martin Stark love

you, — the one with fatherly, the other with brotherly affection." In the battle of Leipzig, Philip came very near losing his life. In her first letter to him after receiving this news, she wrote: "Our priests here remember you daily at Holy Mass, as does also his Excellency, the Nuncio. Father Hofbauer, in his own droll way, said to me: 'Tell him our mouths are sore from praying for him.' I join my motherly petitions to the prayers of these saintly men."

Hofbauer's warmer intimacy with the Pilat family dates from this period, when Louise von Klinkowstroem, owing to the departure of her husband for the front, went to live with her sister, Elizabeth von Pilat, whose husband was likewise employed at the Austrian Headquarters. Both these women were staunch in their adherence to Protestantism, but this fact in no way marred their cordial relations with Hofbauer. They were always delighted to have him call at their house. On these visits, the conversation, naturally, would drift to religious topics. The two sisters soon felt themselves mysteriously attracted to the old mother-Church, while, on his part, Hofbauer "was not wont to sit idly by or maintain a diplomatic silence when he perceived that others were carrying about in their hearts an unquenched longing after the truth." The prejudices of these women against the Church gradually disappeared. Louise's son, Alphonsus Klinkowstroem, relates the circumstances that finally induced them to go over to the Catholic Church. "On April 7, 1814 — Maundy Thursday of that year — Louise and Elizabeth attended the services and received the Lord's Supper in their own church." They had made a fervent preparation for this service, and had looked forward to it with anticipated happiness; but they reaped from it nothing but bitter disappointment. The unsatisfied expectation of their hearts and the scandalous behavior of those present at what they regarded as a very sacred ceremony, plunged them both into a disconsolate mood. "Leaving the church after the service, they walked home in silence, — each too much buried in thought to speak. At home, too, not a word was spoken for some time, until Louise von Klinkowstroem finally broke the painful silence by inquiring: 'Well, Elizabeth, what impression did to-day's service make upon you?' The

words had scarcely crossed her lips, when a knock was heard at the door. The door opened and, wholly unexpected, especially on this day of days when priestly duties were so numerous and taxing, Father Hofbauer entered and greeted the astonished women with the words: 'You have very probably attended your services to-day, and were evidently much edified by what you heard and saw.' And after a moment of extreme embarrassment for the two sisters, who gazed at each other in open amazement, the Saint, without waiting for an answer, added with that genial impulsiveness that was altogether his own: 'So you are taking off the black stockings at last!'—for he had divined the reason for their silence, and at his entrance into the room had perceived what was passing in the troubled hearts of these women, who were usually so bright and cheerful. The few words he had spoken brought their resolution to maturity. That hour they both declared themselves ready to 'take off the black stockings,'—that is to say, to renounce Protestantism.[1] Their only anxiety now was caused by the thought of their first confession; but the Saint lifted this worry from their souls by assuring them: 'Well, it will not kill you. Leave that matter entirely to me. I shall put the questions; you shall have nothing to do but to answer them.' And so, on June 1, 1812, they both made their Profession of Faith in the presence of Hofbauer."[2]

In guarded, conciliatory words, and not without trepidation, did Louise acquaint her husband with the news of her conversion. But her fears were without foundation. Her letter was a glad surprise to Klinkowstroem, who, when he had finished reading it, exclaimed: "So Louise has become a Catholic before me!" He had scarcely returned to Vienna, when

[1] Klinkowstroem, p. 274.

[2] Of the conversion of these two women, Dorothy Schlegel wrote to her son John, who was then in Rome: "-Elizabeth von Pilat and her sister, Louise von Klinkowstroem, have been received into the Church; we were the witnesses at their Profession of Faith. They are both excellent women, pure of heart, full of love and zeal for the faith, and living a life in every way pleasing to God. They both send you greetings, but request that you will not speak of this matter for the present. Certain family affairs make it necessary to keep the fact of their conversion a secret. Klinkowstroem, we may now presume, will follow the example of his wife. The fact is, that while she has preceded him into the Church, his convictions induced her to take this important step." (Feast of Pentecost, 1814. Raich, II. p. 266.)

he hastened to follow the good example of his wife. Hofbauer received him into the Church on September 13, 1814.[3]

Pilat found great changes in his home, on his return from Paris after the Treaty of Peace. His heart and the thoughts of his life were far from the Catholic Church to which he had belonged since childhood. He had transferred his allegiance from the Church to the Lodge; but now he, too, was caught up by the great tide that was moving steadily, yet irresistibly onward toward the Church. He could not withstand the influence of the Saint, and at length he, too, made his peace with God. Of his own conversion he merely says that his wife led him to Hofbauer. "... My eventual return to Catholic life is owing entirely to his fatherly care and interest. I chose him as my confessor, and he remained so until his death." What the Saint came to signify in the life of this gifted but fiery, high-strung man,[4] is best seen from certain passages taken from the letters which Pilat wrote to the Countess Fuchs.

Laura Fuchs, like Julia Zichy, one of the dominant figures among the nobility of Vienna in those days, and, as a contemporary styles her, "a very angel of purity," was a penitent of the Augustinian Father Antoninus, who was highly esteemed as a spiritual director.[5] Pilat, however, wished to convince

[3] We should bear in mind that Klinkowstroem's conversion took place at the very time when he had lost his comfortable, promising position at the Mueller Institute, which came to grief shortly before this date. In the ensuing years he lived in straitened circumstances. His friend, the Protestant Frederick Perthes, who visited him in Vienna, in 1816, writes of him: "Klinkowstroem is poor in the real sense of the word. He has nothing besides his scant salary as collaborator on the 'Austrian Observer.' His entrance into the Church has brought him no temporal advantages whatever. From this testimony, it is evident, that the assertion so frequently made by Protestants, — to wit, that those who latterly went over to the Catholic Church, did so for some temporal gain, seems to me not only base, but also untrue. Men like Schlegel, Werner, Adam Mueller, etc., with their dominant mentality and their undoubted learning, would have attained without difficulty the rank and position they now hold, even had they remained Protestants." (*Life of Frederick Perthes,* II. p. 123.)

[4] He is thus characterized by Frederick Perthes. (*Life of Frederick Perthes,* II. p. 123.)

[5] Count de la Garde, in the work, *Gemaelde des Wiener Kongresses,* I. p. 74, writes of her: "Among the most illustrious women of Austrian society there shone forth above others the handsome Countess Laura Fuchs, who is held in grateful remembrance by the many visitors who were in Vienna at the time of the Congress. Gifted and graceful, this excellent woman impressed one with

her that Hofbauer was the only spiritual director who could be of a real and lasting benefit to her. Repeatedly and ever more urgently does he revert to this subject in his letters to the Countess. Thus, on one occasion he writes: "I cannot tell you how delighted I am that you have at last met and spoken with the esteemed Father Hofbauer. If you will follow my advice, you will choose for your confessor this true apostle of the faith, the most worthy of all the priests that I know, who, of a truth, are very few and far between in these parts. I can assure you that you will receive much consolation from him. I beg you to take my advice. I go to confession to him at least every fortnight, and sometimes oftener in the month; and I always come away from the confessional, and afterwards from the altar, strengthened in faith and in virtue. He will hear your confession either at his home, or in the sacristy of the Ursuline church, or at the Minorites, — just as you may arrange with him. My wife, who is also a penitent of his, will know how to arrange all these matters." (August 5, 1815.)

In another letter, he writes: "One request I wish to make: take Father Hofbauer for your confessor without further delay. I know what I am advising you, my dear, and I am confident that you will be everlastingly grateful to me for urging you to this step. I cannot tell you more than that I have always had a longing to confess to him. He is in very truth a man of God, a priest in the best and fullest sense of the term, to whom you can unreservedly open your heart, as a child would to its own mother."

Other passages from these letters picture the Saint as an intimate friend of the family: "Father Hofbauer was with us yesterday at Hietzing, and we had a very enjoyable visit. And we were not unmindful of you." (August 25, 1815.) "Tomorrow I shall perform my devotions with Elizabeth; then we shall ride with Father Hofbauer as far as Mariabrunn to visit our Frank's grave." (April 23, 1816.) "Last evening I was

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a high idea of the culture and refinement of her country." Strangers considered it high honor to be presented to her. She was the wife of Major, Count Ignatius Fuchs. She died June 29, 1842, "after suffering the pains of a protracted illness with angelic patience — true to her gentle and amiable character to the end." (*Ibidem*, II. p. 176.)

privileged in having Father Hofbauer here alone with me for two hours. Needless to say, I was very happy and edified beyond the power of words to express. He will visit you shortly." In July, 1815, Hofbauer accompanied the entire family to Mariazell. Elizabeth sent the following account of the trip to Laura Fuchs: "My trip to Mariazell was very enjoyable and in every way gratifying. You had a place not only in our conversations, but in our prayers as well. Father Hofbauer has certainly grown very fond of you, my dear Countess. This is so evident, that I could not but notice it."

What a remarkable change had been effected in this family within a brief period of time! The father had been a Freemason; the wife, a Protestant, well versed in her Bible. Now, as if over night, their home is changed into a stronghold of Catholic life and a center of religious activity. Pilat's conversion gave a mighty impetus to the Catholic movement that had its origin in Vienna; for the *Austrian Observer,* the leading newspaper of Austria, of which Pilat was the editor, was thereby brought into closer contact with things Catholic, though, of course, there could as yet be no mention of a Catholic newspaper such as we have to-day. At Schlegel's and at Mueller's, it was chiefly savants, artists, poets, and other writers, that Hofbauer had occasion to meet and influence; here, at Pilat's salon, it was the nobility and the higher officials of the State; for at the home of Pilat, who was a favorite both of the Emperor and of Metternich, distinguished men were wont to gather. Here the Saint undoubtedly sowed much good seed. It was no part of his character, timidly to withhold his views. When occasion offered, and then with a freedom uncurbed by motives of policy, he would speak out an earnest word even to the great and mighty ones of the world.

One of the most unique characters that Hofbauer frequently met at Pilat's was the renowned Frederick von Gentz. We shall be very near the truth if we say that Gentz made the acquaintance of the Saint too late; he had already passed the crisis in his religious development; or, to speak more correctly, the time of grace had passed for him, when Hofbauer came into his life. In 1813, as he himself frankly admitted to Mueller, he had discarded religion altogether. "Since then." he was

wont to say, "all poetry, all sentiment, all feeling, all faith and hope have left me." It was not that he had rejected religion: religion had rejected him, he declared.[6] These admissions, and others even more astounding, from his own lips, give us a clear insight into the soul of this man. Pilat, his most intimate friend, did all in his power, and Father Hofbauer exerted himself to the very utmost, to bring this abnormal, unhappy man back to God, and so back to peace with himself. Again and again Hofbauer begged him to pray. "Yes," replied Gentz, "if only I could pray! then, perhaps, help would come to me; but I cannot pray." Hofbauer thereupon gave up hoping for his conversion: "Gentz will never convert," he remarked dryly, "because he can no longer pray."[7]

Gentz, moreover, seems to have had a deep and permanent dislike of Hofbauer that amounted to an aversion.[8] He was not the only one to be thus affected by the Saint's personality. Whoever once approached this priest, could no longer preserve a neutral attitude toward him: he was either strongly attracted or strongly repelled, according to the state of his soul, which the Saint's searching glance seemed to divine and fathom on the instant. Thus, Baumann, a court actor, and a frequent visitor at Pilat's, invariably reached for his hat and cane and disappeared the moment Hofbauer came in. He frankly admitted that he could not endure the look of this priest; it made him feel as if he must go to confession to him, and so break with his habits of life. With Baumann, however, Pilat had more success than with Gentz, so that eventually he

[6] Letters of Frederick von Gentz to Pilat, II. p. 428.

[7] Gentz died in 1832. His only comfort in his last days was — a beautiful dancing-girl. "In her company," he wrote on one occasion, "I forget all care, old age, and death." (Clement Th. Perthes, *Political Conditions and Persons in Germany during the Time of the French Régime,* II. p. 252.) (Gotha, 1869). On page 247 of this book the author remarks: "It will ever remain a misfortune for the German nation that it cannot claim so extraordinary a man as Gentz as one of its own. Had he possessed a moral earnestness and a spiritual profundity commensurate with his political ability and position, he should for all ages be reckoned among the foremost and greatest men that have sprung from the German people."

[8] See the passage in the *Gentz-Mueller Correspondence,* p. 232, where Mueller says to Gentz: "My habit of combining spiritual and temporal things is as repugnant to you, as if one were to ask you to go to confession to Father Hofbauer."

was able to write to Countess Fuchs: "To-morrow morning I shall take Baumann, who has not been to confession for twenty years, to Father Hofbauer, who is to prepare him."

We must make mention of yet another man who became acquainted with Hofbauer during the summer of 1814, and who thenceforth was regarded as one of the outstanding figures in this circle — Frederick Zachary Werner. We have already met him as Secretary of the Board of Finance at Warsaw and a bitter opponent of the Bennonites. He was transferred to Berlin in 1805, where, reveling in the delights of poetry and in the pleasures of a great city, he so utterly neglected his wife — she was the third he had had — that she left the now prematurely gray, but none the less gay husband. After the defeat of Prussia, he began to lead a desultory, haphazard, wandering sort of life: he traveled all through Germany, France, and Switzerland. Toward the close of 1809, he finally arrived in Rome, which was the scene of the great change in his life. On Maundy Thursday, April 19, 1811, after severe interior struggles, he made his submission to the Church and embraced the Catholic Faith. His fiery spirit now longed to fight for the truths to which he himself had battled his arduous way, and he therefore at once began the study of theology. After spending nearly four years in Rome, he returned to Germany, in July, 1813. The Prince-Primate Dalberg took him into his favor, and admitted him into his seminary at Aschaffenburg. In June, 1814, at the age of forty-six, he was ordained to the sacred priesthood.

Werner was widely known — notorious for his previous disorderly manner of life, and famed for his poetry; hence his conversion caused a great sensation. The most remarkable stories were soon being circulated concerning him. He was variously reported as having in a fit of religious fanaticism made a pilgrimage to Palestine, as living as a hermit on Mount Vesuvius, etc. His eccentricities caused even his Roman friends to grow uneasy about him. Their fears, however, were set at rest by Dr. Christian Schlosser, of Frankfort, who in a letter sent to Rome on June 30, 1814, assured them that Werner was on the right road and absolutely sincere; he added, that all that was needed now, was to turn the energy of the

recent convert in the right direction, and to subject his impetuous and oftentimes vehement zeal to proper guidance; and that, if this were done, this genius with his extraordinary gifts would be sure to accomplish untold good.[9]

In August, 1814, Werner went to Vienna for a consultation with the Nuncio on matters pertaining to the welfare of the Church in Germany. After this interview, he intended to continue his journey to Berlin.[10] But he never got any farther than Vienna; he was detained in the Austrian capital for the rest of his life. During the first days of his sojourn there, he lived with the Servites. In Hohenwart he found a fatherly protector, and in Hofbauer, according to Christian Schlosser, the sort of director who was eminently fitted to guide his first steps along the rugged road of Catholic life. Werner had need of just such a man as Hofbauer, and the relations that sprang up between these two men were quite unique in the history of those times. It was more than mere direction that Werner sought from the Saint. The poet was sadly lacking in self-reliance. Helpless as an infant, he clung tenaciously to the strong arm and imperturbable judgment of Hofbauer, submitting himself to his guidance with the docility of a child. Desiring to be trained anew by him in the school of virtue and spirituality, he took special delight in following his counsels even in the most trifling matters. In a letter which he wrote to a certain Countess, he apologized for his brevity, stating as an excuse that Hofbauer had prescribed the exact length of the letter. What these years spent under the guidance and influence of Hofbauer meant in the life of Werner, the latter himself expressed, when he said: "I have become a thorough Catholic only through Hofbauer."

Thus did our Saint unconsciously become one of the centers of the mighty religious movement that swept over Germany at that time. The precursor who took the lead and showed the way back to Rome for many of the converts during the first two decades of the nineteenth century was Frederick Leopold Count von Stolberg. His return to the Church had the same effect in Germany as was produced a few decades

[9] Howitt: *Frederick Overbeck*, I. p. 289.
[10] *Ibid.*, I. p. 289.

later by the event that took place at Cologne. The stone had been set a-rolling. The movement toward the Church proved mightiest in the world of art. Many young painters and sculptors discovered in Rome, not only new ideals of art, but likewise the path that led back to the old Faith. As in Vienna the recent converts to the Church gathered around Hofbauer, so in Rome Pietro Ostini, born in 1775, and at this time Professor of Church History at the Roman College, was soon surrounded by a coterie of fervent German youths, just returned to the fold. Among those whom he received into the Church were the following: Francis and John Riepenhausen, brothers, and painters, from Goettingen, and Baron von Eckstein, of Copenhagen, who later achieved fame as a publicist; these three, still in their youth, made their Profession of Faith in 1807; they were followed, in 1811, by Werner and by the painter, Frederick Cramer; the year 1812 witnessed the conversion of Dr. Christian Schlosser, of Frankfort, the nephew of Goethe's only sister, a highly intellectual and cultured gentleman: love for art and enthusiastic admiration for Dante had brought him to Italy, and Dante brought him back to the Church.

John Veit, Dorothy Schlegel's son, as the reader will recall, had gone from Vienna to Rome in 1811. Through his good offices a bond of good-will and sympathy had sprung up between the Ostini circle and Hofbauer. This new convert, however, to the great sorrow of the Saint, at first suffered a lapse in his religious views; but a grave illness not only reclaimed the young painter, but so thoroughly revived his fervor that he seriously thought of abandoning his art and becoming a priest. Hofbauer seems to have doubted the genuineness of this vocation. Through Dorothy, he told him that for the present he should consider obedience as the first of the Christian virtues; and that he must endeavor to practise this virtue by continuing to work at his art faithfully and cheerfully, without thinking of changing his state of life. Dorothy added that Hofbauer would recommend to him a good confessor in Rome. This "good confessor" may have been none other than Ostini. At all events, Veit soon stood in close touch with him. Ostini's lectures on Church History

were attended not only by his Catholic young friends, but also by not a few Protestant artists, among others, by that talented painter, Frederick Overbeck, of Lübeck. The latter had been living in Rome since 1810, and rose to prominence as head of the St. Luke's Guild, a German School of Art with romanticist ideals. Ostini received Overbeck's Profession of Faith in 1813. A number of his fellow-artists followed the example of their esteemed leader. Among these were William Schadow and his brother Rudolf; Charles Vogel, later Director of the Academy of Fine Arts in Dresden; and Louis Schnorr, of Carolsfeld. Ernest Platner, later Ambassador from Saxony to the Holy See, also became a Catholic about this time. Young Eggers, of Mecklenburg, with whom Hofbauer became acquainted at the Schlegels', still held aloof.[11]

It was thus that, next to Rome, Vienna, the very stronghold of Josephism, became one of the most important centers of converts to the Church. This fact held out to the Vienna of those days a very providential and necessary lesson. Even the Catholic circles of Josephist Vienna looked with thorough aversion upon all converts. The Austrian capital of those days had accepted and subscribed to the sophism, that every one ought to abide in the religion in which he was born: this was one of the dogmas which the supporters of a decadent Catholicity in Austria, styling themselves the "Illuminati," taught their followers. Even the devout Emperor Francis, it was said, had very little use for converts. This state of affairs alone is sufficient to show how completely all conception of the true nature and mission of the Catholic Church had been lost sight of in those days. The mere presence in the capital of those heroic men and women, who, obeying their convictions, returned to the faith of their fathers, and so braved the odium of their former co-religionists without being able to count upon much sympathy even from the Catholics of Vienna,

[11] John Veit seems to have taken an active part in these conversions. Severoli on one occasion wrote to Cardinal Litta that Schlegel was delighted to hear that his step-son Veit had been instrumental in effecting the conversion of a number of Lutherans who had renounced their sect in Rome. Litta confirms this, saying: "Signore Veit deserves great credit for having contributed very much by his influence to the numerous conversions that have recently taken place."

gradually and naturally worked like a mission. When we recall the lot which fell to these converts, it is not hard to understand Hofbauer's "truly fatherly tenderness and kindness" toward them. Frederick Schlegel very truthfully wrote before his conversion: "The laxity and torpor from which even the Catholic world of to-day has not remained immune, is no reason for putting off one's conversion to the Catholic Church; on the contrary, it is rather a reason for encouraging conversions in the hope that the Church will imbibe new life and vigor from the fervor of the newly-converted, as has frequently happened in the case of the Fathers of the Church."

How intently, and with what fond hopes and prayerful good wishes, Hofbauer watched the progress of this whole movement in Protestant Germany, may easily be imagined. The cleft in the rock of Faith, the saddest fact in the history of Germany, was a frequent subject of his meditations. He now cherished the hope that the hour of reunion had come. Fantastical as this hope of his may seem to us to-day, Hofbauer was not alone in clasping it fondly to his soul. Schlegel, for instance, wrote to Overbeck in the fall of 1814: "You are correct in saying that the present is an important and decisive epoch, not merely for Germany, but for Europe and the whole of Christendom. Woe to us, if we fail to turn it to profit! But I hope for the best, and that so confidently, that I may perhaps be looked upon as foolish for giving expression to this hope. But a great deal can happen within a short time: in times past we have seen that much evil can be wrought in a very brief space; and perhaps we are now to see much good accomplished in an equally short period. The times wing their way toward the marvelous and the incredible, the nearer they approach the divinely-appointed term of their flight." [12]

Here Schlegel's hopes for the future of German Catholicism — hopes which grew more sanguine with the passing years — are very brilliantly displayed. His confidence was shared to no slight extent by Dr. Christian Schlosser, who, about this time, expressed the hope that wise, kind, and zealous priests would, with God's grace, do much to recall to the Church the unbelieving element in Protestant Germany, once the men and

[12] Howitt: *Frederick Overbeck*. I. p. 289.

women who made up this group had been chastened by years of warfare and hardship, and so rendered more susceptible to the deeper emotions that sway the human soul.[13]

Similar thoughts filled the mind of our Saint at this time, giving rise to the formulation of new plans for the future of the Transalpine Congregation. His highly spiritualized vision showed him the Church in Germany in an extremely critical condition. Sadly misunderstood, its very existence threatened by its own children, it nevertheless exerted a very salutary influence on many of the best and noblest minds outside its pale. Its greatest need at this juncture was, as Schlosser declared, "wise, kind, and zealous priests"; and painfully now, did the Saint recall the failure of all his previous plans — plans which, had he been permitted to carry them to fulfilment, should have placed him at this moment in a position to supply all Germany with missionaries. Napoleon's supremacy and domination of Europe were now no more; the Papal States had been restored to their rightful owner, and, on May 24, 1814, amid the general acclaim and rejoicing of the Roman people, the sorely-tried Pontiff Pius VII, under escort of the Austrian and English troops, took possession once more of his capital. The Saint believed that the time had come to bring forward again his old project of erecting a Roman House of Studies for his Congregation. After a prolonged consultation with the Nuncio, he applied by letter directly to Pope Pius VII for the approbation of his plans. This letter, unfortunately, has not been discovered. But from other letters we learn that Hofbauer submitted to the Pope a plan for a large Roman Mission-Seminary for German Redemptorists, which was to have as its specific object the further advancement of the Catholic movement in Germany, and as its ultimate aim the complete reunion of the separated brethren with the Church. "Through the mercy of God," he wrote, "they seem at this moment ready to receive the light that will dispel their prejudices against the Church."

We are not acquainted with the particulars of this plan. He contemplated recalling the Fathers from Switzerland and employing their services in Germany as soon as there were

[13] *Ibid.*, I. p. 301.

reasonable prospects of a foundation on German soil. Their number would subsequently have to be augmented by graduates from the Roman College. Frequently during these months, his thoughts traveled over the Alps to the Eternal City. Since the Pope's triumphant return to Rome, he felt himself peculiarly drawn to Italy. It was eleven years since he last saw the Capital of Christendom. The Schlegels were thinking of going to Rome, in order to settle there; and, on September 10, 1814, Dorothy wrote to John Veit: "I firmly believe that if we go to Rome, Father Hofbauer will go with us; he has really a fatherly affection for us, and a great longing to visit the Eternal City." [14]

Cardinal Litta, who was the first to read Hofbauer's letter, was deeply touched by its contents, as he assured Severoli. "It was a great consolation to me," he wrote, "to see again the handwriting of this excellent Religious after the lapse of so many years so replete with remarkable experiences; and I am very happy to perceive that, in spite of his advanced age, his fatiguing labors, and his numerous disappointments, his zeal for the honor and glory of God and his thirst for the salvation of souls have not abated in the least." Hofbauer was, alas! to meet with disappointment this time again. This very year witnessed the restoration of the Society of Jesus; and Pope Pius declared that he did not deem it advisable to erect in Rome a second college having the same object as the *Collegium Germanicum*, which he intended giving back to the Jesuits. His Holiness believed that there would be work enough in Germany to engage the zeal of Hofbauer and his brethren, especially as the Roman Institutions would not be in a position for some time to send new missionaries to that country.

No matter what the plans of the Saint, they seemed ever doomed to encounter insurmountable obstacles. But how little this fresh failure succeeded in embittering him, is shown from a passage in one of his letters to Cardinal Litta, in which he expresses his thanks to him for the pains he took in this matter: "I do not remember ever having offered the Holy Sacrifice without making a memento of Your Eminence and of the other Prelates. In regard to my plan, I learn from Your

[14] Raich, II. p. 274.

Eminence that for the present I cannot accomplish anything in Rome; I have therefore resolved to do all in my power to come to the aid of the Catholic Church here in Germany. In spite of my advanced age — I am now over sixty years of age — and in spite of my many labors in the Lord's vineyard, labors that taxed my strength and wore me out in the years now past, by the grace of God I feel at present just as strong as I did thirty years ago. I do not therefore refuse to subject myself to still greater exertions in behalf of the Church of God, especially here in Germany; for in no other country is religion so endangered at the present time, and nowhere is there so great a need of faithful shepherds to seek the lost sheep and bring them back to the fold of Christ."

CHAPTER IV

DURING THE DAYS OF THE CONGRESS OF VIENNA (1814–1815)

TO realize how much Hofbauer's attention at this time was riveted upon the Church-question in Germany, one need only refer to his letter to Cardinal Litta, from which we have just quoted. His was no second-hand knowledge of the ecclesiastical and religious conditions there. It had been acquired by personal experience in the first instance, and had grown considerably broader and deeper during these years as a result of his almost daily intercourse with persons who were reckoned among the great minds of Germany. Chief among these were such notable characters as Frederick and Dorothy Schlegel, Werner, and not a few others. There was scarcely a celebrity, at least in the world of letters, in Germany, with whom the Schlegels did not come in contact.

The general complexion of matters ecclesiastical in Germany, as it appeared during this epoch to those acquainted with the actual conditions, was very depressing. Even Wessenberg, in a memorial prepared for the Congress of Vienna, writes: "For the past twelve years the Church in Germany, which previously flourished as the lily, has languished under the blight of evil winds as never before in history. The possessions of the Church have been taken from it; its venerable constitution is without legal protection; its most essential institutions are without any assured income; its bishoprics are for the most part vacant, and the cathedral chapters are well-nigh extinct. . . . The injury which all this derangement in the Church's normal constitution and this dissolution of many of its rightful functions have done to the real welfare of the German States is too evident to be missed, and so extensive that it can hardly be calculated."

The interference with the Church's external functions, however, was one of the lesser evils. The greatest danger was that which loomed from within the Church itself. An influential

party among the German clergy, operating under Wessenberg's immediate leadership, attempted a reform of the Church in Germany that was tantamount to the denial and subversion of the Church's autonomy. During the past ten years, Wessenberg, as Administrator of the Diocese of Constance, had more and more shown by his policies that he recognized neither the binding force of ecclesiastical laws in general, nor the actual jurisdiction of the Pope over the universal Church. According to his distorted view, no system of ecclesiastical government could be proper and correct that did not, above all things else, safeguard the Episcopate against the encroachments and pretensions of the Roman Curia. Supported and emboldened by a small but very active party among the German clergy, he had fitted out a vessel of his own in opposition to the bark of Peter, and was steering its course, with sails full-spread, directly toward the shoals of schism in the form of a German National Church.

In the fall of 1814, the great Congress of Europe was to meet at Vienna. During the entire previous summer, the Nuncio at Vienna, who was sincerely solicitous for the welfare of the Church in Germany, made serious preparations for this important event. As he wrote to Cardinal Litta in the beginning of September, he went again and again into consultation, not only with Father Hofbauer, but also with other good and fervent Catholics both in the capital itself and throughout the Empire. "Our Father Hofbauer," he declared, "has splendid, constructive ideas. I heartily wish that he were with you in Rome, so as to be able personally to place them before you. I know Your Eminence would have the patience to listen to him." One of these "splendid ideas" which Hofbauer cherished, we have already learned. There were others: among other things which he recognized as urgent needs, was the restoration of relations along the most intimate lines possible between Rome and Germany. He had long since clearly understood the principal cause of all the religious trouble in Germany: the bond between the Church in Germany and the Holy See was not only much too slender, but almost completely severed. How little the Roman authorities knew of the actual conditions, was revealed by a very significant fact

at this time. On March 24, 1809, the Bavarian Government had published its notorious Edict concerning religion. This was fully five years before the opening of the Congress of Vienna; and yet, nothing seems to have been known about this Edict in Italy, until Cardinal Hercules Consalvi, Papal Secretary of State, learned of its existence, in August, 1814, when he was passing through Munich on his way to Vienna, to represent the Pope at the Congress, and sent a copy of it to Rome. During the political upheavals everywhere consequent upon the Napoleonic Wars, the Pope had been dragged into captivity, and the fate that then befell the Roman Curia partly explains the confusion existing in official ecclesiastical circles. Hofbauer had his own views about Rome's diplomatic relations with Germany. He always maintained that Rome knew too little about the peculiarities of the German people, and, not understanding or misunderstanding these, did not know how to handle the Germans. During his last visit to Rome, in 1803, he had expressed himself very frankly on this head not only to the Cardinals, but even to the Pope. In Vienna, he had frequently remonstrated with the Nuncio and with his friend, the Auditor of the Nunciature, Monsignor Muzzi, insisting that Rome must take a greater interest in the Germans than had heretofore been its wont. The utterances of the converts of Vienna who were without doubt the most loyal children of the Pope, were cast along the same lines. Disregard for the authority of the Pope, resulting in the weakening of that authority, Hofbauer recognized as one of the most lamentable evils of the time, and had taken care to provide against it. Unalterable fidelity to the Holy See and the advocacy and vindication of the rights of the Pope, he had written into the constitution of his Congregation of Oblates as one of the principal obligations of the members. Most of his friends in Vienna belonged to this organization. In return, however, these members expected Rome to let no opportunity pass of relieving the Church of Germany in its distress. Severoli once sent to Consalvi an account of a very painful scene enacted in his presence. In a company of friends, the conversation drifted to the tactics of heretics and unbelievers, and great stress was laid upon the fact that, however they might disagree among themselves,

they were united in their assaults against the Church. A Catholic in high standing — it may have been the impetuous Pilat — turned upon Severoli, and sharply demanded: "And what about Rome? What is Rome doing for us? What effort has it made to preserve union among us? What recognition has it given to Stolberg, Schlegel, Werner, or Schlosser, who are battling in the cause of right and truth?" Severoli was broad-minded enough not to take offense at such language. In this matter, he was wholly of one mind with Hofbauer, and bent all his efforts to the selfsame end as he. "Tell our Romans," he once advised Cardinal Litta, "that if they wish to be of real use to our holy religion, they should make a study of Germany and of the language of its people. If you could induce a few good and zealous priests to take a studious interest in a country with which we are so little acquainted, you would be conferring an immense benefit on religion." He did not hesitate to add that he regarded it as a serious part of Litta's duty to encourage the cultivation of the German language in Rome.

One of the principal aims of the Hofbauer Circle was to keep the Roman Curia fully informed of all noteworthy happenings in Germany. In Rome, Ostini, the spiritual director of the St. Luke's Guild, worked in the same direction. He even contemplated the founding and publication of a Journal, which was to treat of the German character in so far as it came in contact with religion and the Church. With this end in view, he opened a correspondence with Schlegel in Vienna, who was to furnish the matter. Severoli had already approached Schlegel with a similar design.[1] The latter, however, demanded that living Journals, as he called them, — that is to say, Legates of the Holy See, — be first sent from Rome to Germany, — a demand to which he invariably reverted. In December,

[1] That Schlegel was likewise active in this direction is evident from Severoli's letter to Litta, dated August 2, 1814: "I wish that Schlegel were there (in Rome)," he writes, "so that there would be in Rome some one well acquainted with all the details of conditions in Germany. For the present, I am happy to have him near me, for his zeal and his untiring diligence in writing in behalf of religion is a constant source of edification to me. His Eminence, the Pro-secretary of State (Pacca), knows my friendship for this man from my letters. When Consalvi comes, I shall introduce Schlegel to him; he will then learn to know him and judge what manner of man he is." (Archives of the Nunciature at Vienna.)

1814, the Nuncio even proposed the founding of an Academy of Letters for the same purpose of strengthening the bond between Germany and Rome, its Director to be a cultured, literary German layman having a German priest as his Assistant. The members of this Academy were to follow up the ecclesiastical and religious literature of Germany for the information of the Holy See, and, as occasion demanded, combat dangerous tendencies by the publication of critiques and counter-articles. "It is certain," declares the Nuncio, "that we must become better acquainted with Germany; it is our solemn duty to study the language of its people and let them feel how highly we esteem their literature, their customs, and their manners; for we are dealing here with the most important nation in the whole of Europe. The favorable dispositions of the Protestants should spur us on to do considerably more for them than we have done in the past. Every day Protestants come over to the Church; but they are led to the threshold of the Faith more by their own hearts than by our efforts." Severoli declared that upon the restoration of the Society of Jesus, one of the colleges of the Jesuits should have been set aside and endowed for this very purpose. In this way, he believed, provision could have been made for many of the cultured men of letters who had embraced the Faith and who, because of their conversion, were frequently placed in very critical situations. Litta shared the Nuncio's views; for he realized, he said, that the Germans were deserving of every recognition both for their own national character, and for their extensive connections. "The attitude and plans which you propose," he writes, "deserve every consideration, and I shall be happy to assist you in every way possible."

These proposals and ardent yearnings were productive of few, if any practical results. The efforts of Hofbauer and his friends, however, did not remain entirely barren. Severoli wrote to Litta: "I take comfort from the fact that the letters of this most worthy Religious have given the Holy See an exact survey of the present status of the Church in Germany. His reports will at least serve to call attention to the numerous needs of the Church in these parts."

The last days of September, 1814, witnessed the inaugura-

tion of the memorable Congress of Vienna, which, before its sessions had been concluded, attracted more than one hundred thousand strangers to the capital. The first of the monarchs were appearing on the scene. On September 25, the Emperor Francis met the Czar of Russia and the King of Prussia at the Thabor Bridge and extended to them the welcome of the Austrian nation. "Endless multitudes lined the banks of the river and rent the air with their shouts of joy. . . . Meanwhile the three monarchs had mounted their horses, and the grand pageant began to move forward. The well-nigh endless number of Generals forming their escort and representing all the nations of Europe; the precious habiliments and magnificent trappings of the marchers, bright in the clear sunlight; the joyous shouts of the multitude; the tumbling melody of ringing church-bells; the salvos of more than a thousand volleys of cannon; the spectacle of a populace greeting the return of peace with cries of jubilation; the cordiality and friendliness of the Rulers: — all these details helped to make this a scene of pomp and splendor that the beholder was not likely soon to forget." [2]

One of the royal guests welcomed the opportunity which his presence in Vienna afforded, of entering into cordial relations with our Saint. This was none other than Louis, Crown Prince of Bavaria. On several occasions he personally sought out and visited Hofbauer at his dwelling in the "Seilerstaette"; and the deference which the young Prince displayed in the presence of this poor priest was indeed edifying. He prolonged one of these visits with the Saint from half past eight o'clock in the evening until half past two the next morning. Stark and Sabelli kept watch at the door to ward off any intruders. At the end of this interview Stark accompanied the Prince back to his quarters. That Hofbauer did not miss this opportunity of recommending the welfare of the Church to the future Ruler of one of the most influential States in Germany, cannot be doubted; but to what extent ecclesiastical and political questions were made the topics of these conversations, and what influence these interviews actually had on the subsequent course of events, cannot, of course, be determined. Very

[2] De la Garde, *Gemaelde*, I. p. 23.

probably, the Prince's primary motive in thus seeking out the Saint was to ask his advice and guidance in matters pertaining to his own conscience; and indeed the Prince on more than one occasion had need of just such a firm counselor as Father Hofbauer.[3]

The Saint made a number of new friends during the time of the Congress. Notable among these were Frederick and Sophia Schlosser, whom he met first at the home of Pilat. Frederick Schlosser, Christian Schlosser's brother, "a mild, gentle, sensitive soul in a frail and delicate body,"[4] as Rosenthal describes him, had come to the Congress as representative

[3] At a social gathering one evening an estrangement of long standing between the Prince and his brother-in-law, the Crown Prince William of Wuerttemberg, came to an open break. The high dignitaries were playing at "Blind Man's Buff." During the progress of the game, the Bavarian Prince "captured" Julia Zichy. His cousin of Wuerttemberg twitted him by claiming that he had not been properly blindfolded at the time of this capture. Louis immediately challenged him to a duel, which was to be fought the following morning. William appeared punctually, not so his cousin Louis. A letter from Prince Wrede settled the affair in an amicable manner. (Fournier, *Geheimpolizei,* p. 59.) Without further warrant it would be somewhat hazardous to connect this unfought duel with that interview with Hofbauer, prolonged so far into the night. However, the incident does show that the fiery young Prince had need of a very wise and firm director.

Julia Zichy, to whom reference is here made, was the niece of Széchényi; and she is the Hungarian Countess whom we have come to know as a penitent of Father Hofbauer's. During these weeks, by reason of her position, she was drawn into a whirl of social festivities and amusements which were hardly to the taste of this soul so devoted to the interior life. Universally admired, sought after, and honored, she was the center of attraction in these élite gatherings. All the Monarchs spent Sylvester Night (New Year's Eve) at her house, and as the clock struck the midnight hour she proposed the first toast. "The gathering at the house of Countess Zichy was not only brilliant, but also one of the largest that had been witnessed in a long time," wrote one of those who were present. (De la Garde, *Gemaelde,* I. p. 23.) The expression referring to her beauty — *"céleste beauté"* — owes its origin to Czar Alexander. Her greatest admirer, however, was Frederick William III, of Prussia. It was said of this King, that for his ill-humor, which became a chronic ailment during the negotiations with Saxony, there were only two remedies: the superb comedians of Leopoldstadt, and the aristocratic society in which the beautiful Julia Zichy was sure to be found. When at a ball, he remained at her side for two hours; and on his departure from Vienna, he shed tears when bidding farewell in the Zichy house. (Fournier, *Geheimpolizei,* p. 55.) Similar attentions were paid to the Countess Auersperg-Lobkowitz by the Czar. "Both these ladies, however, remained unaffected by these attentions; they met the most obsequious importunities of the Monarchs with true nobility of soul." (De la Garde, *Gemaelde,* I. p. 158, note 3.)

[4] Rosenthal, *Konvertitenbilder,* I. p. 235.

from Frankfort. His wife Sophia may without hesitation be counted among the noblest and most intellectual women of her times. This woman, "magnanimous in appearance and manner," reminded a certain contemporary, "of the matrons of ancient Christian Rome." [5] What Hofbauer became to her and her husband, she herself recorded in writing, fifty years later, shortly before her death: "It is hardly possible to describe the impression which this saintly man made. The keynote of his whole character was love for God and for God's Holy Church, resulting in an unquenchable longing to lead souls to God. This showed itself in his whole being, in his words and actions, and especially in his sermons, which, plain and simple as he was himself, nevertheless left an impression that was irresistible. When in discoursing on the glories of the Catholic Church, he added: 'Only they can understand them who have the happiness of belonging to the number of its children,' a longing to become a child of that Church filled my heart, and thus I actually entered the Church without distinctly knowing what it would offer me. Nevertheless, I distinctly felt that only by entering its fold could I find that peace and contentment of heart which Calvinism had never given me."

Her husband, too, shortly after his arrival in Vienna, resolved to return to the Catholic Church. What his motives were in taking this step, he has nowhere recorded. Sophia simply remarks: "A sincere, earnest conviction, which had been awakened in him by the conversion of his dearly-loved brother (Dr. Christian Schlosser), and which, in the fall of 1814, had been much strengthened by his acquaintance with Father Hofbauer, finally effected his own conversion. He realized perfectly what he was doing, and he did not feel obliged to give in writing an account of this action either to himself or to others." Frederick and Sophia Schlosser made their Profession of Faith on December 27, 1814. Sophia writes: "After our Profession of Faith, Father Hofbauer treated us as his children. It often happened that after receiving Holy Communion at his Mass, we breakfasted with him; and I can truthfully say, that I have never spent any happier hours than

[5] *Historisch-Politische Blaetter*, LVII. p. 98.

those, when surrounded by his disciples, he appeared to us like the most cheerful, childlike, and happy of fathers."

A very intimate friendship developed also between Hofbauer and Baron Francis von Wambold, Dean of the Cathedral of Worms, and likewise between the Saint and Joseph Helfferich, Prebendary of the Cathedral of Speier. These two prelates, both devoted and loyal to the Holy See, had come to the Congress as the official representatives of several German Dioceses and Chapters. They called themselves "The Petitioners of the German Church," and immediately got in touch with the Nuncio at Vienna, and with the members of the Hofbauer Circle.

Hopes for the outcome of the Congress loomed bright, when an ominous cloud descended to overshadow them. By order of Dalberg, Primate of all Germany, there appeared on the scene as the official representative of the entire German Church none other than Wessenberg. With what sentiments Hofbauer received this intelligence, may well be imagined. He knew Wessenberg too well to fancy that in his official capacity his presence at the Congress could bode anything but harm for the Church. If Wessenberg with his principles prevailed, the Saint could visualize, instead of the cure of existing evils, nothing but complete disaster. The more he reflected upon the peculiar turn which events had taken, the more he feared for the future of religion. Wessenberg now summoned all the resources of his splendid talents, his powerful influence, and his almost superhuman energy to his aid, and employed them all to the utmost advantage in laboring to realize his lifelong dream of a German National Church. For the next three or four years, this menace continued to hang like an ominous cloud over the Church in Germany; and it rested heavily, too, on the mind of the Saint, who at all times was kept informed of every move that was made to convert Wessenberg's dream into a stern reality.

But Hofbauer labored untiringly in thwarting Wessenberg's project, for, without engaging in ecclesiastical or political activities outside the sphere of his position, he lent his assistance to all measures bearing on the reconstruction of the Church in Germany. His cordial relations with the heads of the

Hierarchy gave him distinct advantages, and the temptation to overstep the limitations of his private rôle as an ordinary parish priest, was close at hand. But he constantly bore in mind that his field of labor was the immediate care of souls. Prayer and silent suffering were his principal weapons in the struggle for the German Church so dear to his heart. Daily now his fervent petitions for Dalberg and Wessenberg rose to heaven; meanwhile he relaxed none of his vigilance and indefatigable zeal, but labored the more, admonishing, encouraging, advising all those men about him who were to have a voice in deciding the ultimate fate of the German Church.

From the outset Consalvi was not in favor of introducing in the Congress questions regarding the German Church; he believed it more desirable and expedient to settle these by special Concordats with the individual German States. The far-seeing papal diplomat was right. The result of all the memorials presented and of all the business transacted at the Congress under the head of German ecclesiastical affairs, amounted to nothing. To what extent our Saint influenced the deliberations and decisions of these conferences, at which the Nuncio and Schlegel were outstanding figures, and what credit is due to him for the memorials handed in by Consalvi and the Petitioners, it is, of course, impossible to determine. Certain it is that his views and his advice were highly esteemed, even by Consalvi. Helfferich, too, was often seen in consultation with him; but because the latter sought the counsel and guidance of Hofbauer, is no reason for supposing that this prelate defended only the Saint's views. The energetic Canon of Speier, zealous as he was for the welfare and honor of the Church, was nevertheless a very independent little man, with plans and ideas of his own that did not always meet with Hofbauer's unqualified approval.[6] It has not been generally

[6] Thus, for example, Helfferich entertained the strange notion of restoring the German Order of Knights under a new form and with divers degrees of membership, and had already submitted a detailed plan showing the manner in which it should be restored. In an opinion prepared for the Nuncio, Hofbauer declared that the delegates would merely make themselves ridiculous by attempting such a thing. Hofbauer further stated with regard to Helfferich's views concerning the marriage question in Germany, that, so far as he was able to judge from actual experience, these views were overdrawn.

known, however, that persons most competent to speak with authority concerning the business of the Congress, have given Hofbauer full credit for the very important assistance which he gave those who were sincerely laboring for the reconstruction of the German Church.

The German Committee, with Metternich as Chairman, began its sessions on October 14, 1814. The Petitioners presented a memorial to the Committee on October 30, and Consalvi another on November 14; in drawing up both these memorials Schlegel's proposition had served them as a guide. One of the main points which the Petitioners emphasized, was the necessity of rescinding the right, hitherto enjoyed by the Rulers, to appoint Bishops to the vacant sees of Germany. Of the thirty-four German bishoprics, only five were occupied at this time. The Petitioners insisted that the incumbents for these and all future vacancies be appointed in the first instance by the Holy Father; and thereafter by the election of the Diocesan Chapter. The hopes of the Petitioners, which had been raised high by the preliminary advances made by the Committee, were soon blasted; for, on November 16, the Committee was dissolved, without having given any serious consideration whatever to ecclesiastical questions. So matters rested for the following months. Not until the spring of 1815 did there seem to be any reason to believe that the Congress would turn its attention to the reconstruction of the Church in Germany. In April, official negotiations were set on foot for the settlement of the Acts of the German Confederacy. Severoli wrote to Cardinal Litta in Rome, on April 29, that he expected some good to result from these meetings: "If matters turn out according to our wishes, the Holy Father will soon be able to appoint the first Bishops." The question of the episcopal appointments thus came again to the fore; in fact, suitable candidates for the vacant sees were already being selected.[7] That Hofbauer's

[7] Two lists of worthy priests drawn up by Helfferich served as guides in this selection. One list contained twenty-two names, among others, Sambuga, Sailer, the Abbot Thaddeus, of Roggenburg, and Overberg. The second list contained seven names; among these were Hofbauer, the Servite Father Bernardine, of Vienna, Purtscher, Regent of the Seminary in Chur, and Wagner, Pastor in Weinried. It appears, however, that Helfferich sponsored only the candidates mentioned in the first list.

name was prominently mentioned in the list of new German bishops, is not at all surprising. In the spring of the year a report was circulated to the effect that the Propaganda intended to appoint him to a bishopric in the Balkans. As we shall see farther on, this report was no mere idle gossip; there was some foundation to it. But as Severoli wrote to Cardinal Litta, as soon as this report came to their ears, Penckler, Schlegel, Werner, Pilat, and Mendelssohn (*i.e.*, Dorothy), and many zealous women, immediately offered objections. "They convinced me," writes Severoli, "that he must unquestionably have a bishopric among the Germans." Severoli heartily agreed with them. He declared that if matters developed according to his wishes, he would in advance, with the permission of the Holy See, exert his influence to have Hofbauer numbered among the appointees to the first German bishoprics. "The esteem in which this man is held in Germany is very great; moreover, he is thoroughly acquainted with all the needs of Germany. . . . Possibly his lamentations over the sufferings of the Church have pictured him to Your Eminence as a Jeremiah; but let me assure you, that he is also a Daniel in prudence, and a real Saint in his entire mode of living." Litta replied from Genoa, on May 10: "I approve your plan to procure a bishopric in Germany for Hofbauer. You may rest assured, that I shall rejoice if your plan succeeds. These many years, ever since I was in Warsaw, I have known Father Hofbauer and his confrères, and I am deeply indebted to them, both for what I myself owe them and for the services they have rendered to the Catholics of that Nunciature. I shall not fail to coöperate with you in every way possible toward the realization of a project that holds such promise for the future."

But all these hopes were based on the supposition that the Acts of the German Confederacy, in treating of the questions bearing on ecclesiastical matters, would propose, or at least prepare the way for, a General Concordat between the entire German Church and the Holy See; but no such proposal was forthcoming. Even so early as May 24, Severoli was obliged to send in this report to the Prefect of the Propaganda: "With regard to the esteemed Father Hofbauer, we have not yet

abandoned all hope of a General Concordat with all the German Churches; but for the present, it is extremely doubtful if any such Concordat will be formed." As is well known, the Acts of the German Confederacy left all questions of an ecclesiastical nature entirely untouched. The Fifteenth Article of the draft suggests that the adjustment of such matters be placed "under the guarantee of the Confederacy"; but this meaningless Article was later deleted. "Those who are favorably inclined," wrote Severoli in the letter just quoted, "are of the opinion that the vacant sees should be filled without regard to Concordats." He does not, however, state his own views concerning this radical proposition, which surely could not have been carried out without encountering untold difficulties. He merely adds in conclusion: "It is certain that the disorders in the Church in Germany are daily growing more numerous."

Simultaneously with the opening of the Congress, Werner began his career as a pulpit orator in the churches of Vienna. Although he had intended remaining in the capital only for a short period, he had scarcely arrived in the city, when he appeared in the pulpits of various churches. From his autobiographical notes we learn that he did not do so on his own initiative; and there is good reason to believe that it was Hofbauer who urged him to preach the Word of God. Werner's sermons proved one of the sensations of this time of the Congress. It came to be almost as a mandate of the social etiquette of those days, to see and hear him in the pulpit at least once. His literary fame; his conversion, which had created so much surprise; the strange reports circulated concerning him; his whole character bordering, as it did, on the eccentric; but above all, the originality of his sermons, with their beautiful language and imagery and their picturesque descriptions; and, more than aught else, his absolute fearlessness, so pronounced that it carried him at times to the very edge of discourtesy and affront: all these features conspired to attract the people in such astounding numbers as had not been witnessed in Vienna for many a year. We owe whatever accounts we have of his fiery discourses to the police who shadowed him from the very outset of his amazing activity as a pulpit orator.

On December 4, he preached in the church at the Imperial Court. It was his fifth sermon in Vienna. The Chief of Police recognized many notables among the audience — the King of Prussia, the Crown Prince of Wuerttemberg, Prince August of Prussia, many other persons of rank, and a host of clergymen both Catholic and Protestant. Werner took as his subject "The False Ideal of Culture" which had been set up during the period when the "Illuminati" essayed to direct the course of modern thought. He declared that he felt it his duty to preach against this chimera that had so long enslaved the minds of men, even if, in doing so, he was running the risk of giving offense, and of being considered by some as too presumptuous and by others as a fanatical visionary. He knew, he declared, whither that road of false culture led, as he himself had traveled it.

On December 8, he preached in the church of the Franciscans. The multitudes that flocked to the edifice were so great that a panic was imminent. During the High Mass, which was chanted before the sermon, the church was already so crowded that the sound of the drums and the trumpets was quite drowned by the cries issuing from the wedged-in mass of humanity. The people finally climbed upon the altar-steps and perched on the confessionals. Werner's appearance in the pulpit was followed by a few moments of deathlike silence. The police-report thus concludes its description of this scene: "The common people look upon Werner as a prophet and revere him as such; and sensible persons of sound judgment will not venture to predict what will be the ultimate effect of his numerous sermons. The populace runs to hear him, not hesitating to place even their health and their life in peril in order to be among his audience. It is evident that a sort of fanaticism has descended upon the city in consequence of this man's unusual appeal."

Opinions of Werner's preaching differed very widely. He was met both by sincere recognition and by hearty disapproval and the bitterest criticism. Many suddenly recalled the disorders of his past life, and, in their self-righteous indignation, discovered traces of his former weaknesses even in his sermons. He was severely denounced, too, by many earnest and sincere Catholics; and that not without reason. In the pulpit

he had a habit of referring constantly to himself, which repelled and antagonized many of his hearers; and there was some truth in the remark made by a certain malevolent person: "He raves like a maniac and talks like a cab-driver." Some of his mannerisms were extremely awkward and unbecoming. At times he would bury his face in his hands and rest on the edge of the pulpit. Again, he would project his tall, haggard form out over the pulpit, whirl his arms about in most violent fashion, or strike the pulpit so forcibly with his clenched fist that the blow resounded throughout the church. The fine effect of much that he said was often marred by remarks which were wholly unworthy of the dignity of a sacred orator. He once told the refined ladies of Vienna that he had more respect for their cooks than he had for them. On another occasion he finished his sermon and left the pulpit with this abrupt conclusion: "You probably imagine that the Kings and Lords of Europe have made peace. Nonsense! Amen!"

In short, Pilat was probably right when he declared that Werner's sermons were more likely to repel than to attract devout persons. Nor did the Nuncio Severoli grow enthusiastic over Werner, when the latter first appeared before the public as a preacher. A few days after the sermon in the Franciscan Church, Severoli wrote to Litta: "The Abbé Werner, too, is here in Vienna. He is very zealous; but so far, I am not able to tell how many souls he has led to God by his boisterous sermons. . . . I have advised him to preach Christ Crucified."

These opinions serve at least to bring into clearer light Hofbauer's relations to Werner. If it was not the Saint who in the beginning induced Werner to preach to the people, he at all events encouraged him to continue his zealous efforts in the pulpit. Not later than January, 1815, Werner appeared also in the pulpit of St. Ursula's, thereafter most frequently the scene of his public utterances. That same year he preached the Lenten sermons there, and during Holy Week conducted a Retreat for young women. The reader need not be reminded that Hofbauer's manner of preaching was vastly different from Werner's. No doubt our Saint was not a whit more pleased with his friend's extravagant mannerisms in the

pulpit than were some of Werner's severest critics; in fact, they were probably more distasteful to him than to any one else. But the fact that he did not allow his judgment to be influenced by these external matters, is another proof of his broad-mindedness and his far-sighted vision. He saw what was below this turbulent and unattractive surface. He recognized in Werner a trumpet of God, whose voice was calling back to the Church hundreds and thousands of men and women long estranged from it. He realized that for many of these the sermon which they listened to at first from mere curiosity, might in reality prove to be the call of efficacious grace and the first step toward salvation. Werner's mannerisms in the pulpit he regarded as but the luxuriant excrescences of genius, which the pruning-knife of time and experience would gradually cut off. It is probable that Hofbauer thus adjudged his friend, and according to this judgment he shaped his actions and attitude. He subjected his old but docile disciple to a severe training in order to make of him a true apostle. Once, when Werner in the course of a sermon had let fall an expression that was dogmatically incorrect, he unrelentingly insisted that the error be corrected the following Sunday. On another occasion Hofbauer entered the sacristy to find Werner waiting for him. The zealous convert had intended going to confession that day, but had been unable to meet the Saint at home. For this reason, he had come to the sacristy, to make his confession there before ascending the pulpit, and he now whispered his request to the Saint. But Father Hofbauer replied in a voice audible to all present: "What! You choose this time to go to confession, when you ought to be in the pulpit this good while!" This was a little too much for Werner. Grumbling to himself, he sauntered out of the sacristy into the pulpit. "He is one of the trumpets of God," Hofbauer remarked, more to himself than to those present; "but his Prussian pride can never be humbled enough."

It was not long, however, before even Werner's severest critics were able to pronounce themselves satisfied with the matter and the delivery of his discourses. What had been sensational in his manner disappeared of itself. A police-report, under date of February, 1815, has the following: "The

curiosity of the people in seeing and hearing this preacher seems at last to have been satisfied, and the admiration which he inspired to have died out." The March report says: "His manner of preaching is now milder." The frequent citation of poems in the pulpit had been forbidden him by his master: "Omit the verses," the Saint ordered; "do not make yourself ridiculous, and preach decently." No one, Werner avowed, had ever ventured to speak to him in this manner; nevertheless, the Saint more and more became to him the model after which he strove to fashion himself in his own sermons. His hearers soon remarked that he was endeavoring to imitate Hofbauer's manner in the pulpit. Those whom no mere craving for the sensational drew to his sermons, only now began to value him at his proper worth. Toward the end of February, Severoli wrote to Litta: "All right-minded persons are now perfectly satisfied with him: he preaches well; and there is now about him nothing that even remotely borders on the burlesque, although certain newspapers would have their readers believe that there is." If the Nuncio once doubted whether Werner was attracting souls to God by his manner of preaching, that doubt had now vanished. Werner was much in demand in the confessional. Souls that had strayed away from God came to place their confidence in him. Prematurely worn out by his restless zeal, Werner died in 1823; and not until then did it appear what an important influence he had had on many lives. "Persons of rank as well as of the middle classes," we read in a short obituary sketch published after his death, "men and women of culture no less than persons from the lower walks of life, thronged about his bier and gratefully kissed his hands now cold in death; and as if this were not sufficient, they frankly and publicly confessed that it was through his efforts that they had finally been brought back to the knowledge of the truth and the way of salvation." Eichendorff adds: "This, verily, is a flaming epitaph, which consumes all the empty talk of fanaticism and of Jesuitism, etc., that was uttered against him, and for which many a poet might well envy him in his last hour."

Werner took an active part in the Catholic movement in Vienna. This is proved from the odium which he won for him-

self in certain quarters. In the hearts of thousands he re-awakened and brought back to healthy and vigorous life the consciousness of faith, and, next to Hofbauer he was chiefly instrumental in restoring solid Catholic preaching in the pulpits of Vienna. Dorothy Schlegel's comment, as written in a letter to her husband at Frankfort, in March, 1816, is worthy of note: "Werner's sermons continue to create a great sensation. It is a pleasure to see how people flock to them. Persons that have not been seen inside a church within the memory of man, go to listen to him. They rage against him, but always return to hear him again. People of quality now dine at six o'clock in the evening, so as to be able to be on time for his sermons. He is accomplishing untold good; for not only his sermons, but those of all the other preachers in the city, are being well attended, because the latter, beholding how the people are again frequenting the churches, are making great efforts. In the evening ladies and gentlemen can be heard asking one another: 'Where did you attend the sermon to-day? How did you like the preacher?'—just as one is wont to inquire after a performance at the theater."

A great deal of the credit for all this really belongs to Hofbauer. What Werner needed was not merely a spiritual guide who would be to him a never-failing source of enlightenment and strengthening, but above all else, one who would act as a moral check on his whole character. He found both in Father Hofbauer, who from the very first days after his conversion stepped forward in his defense; for at that time even those friends of the convert who wished him well, could not entirely rid themselves of all misgivings concerning him. On the other hand, the Saint himself lost nothing by thus espousing Werner's cause. With noble self-effacement Werner regarded it as his duty to become the "precursor" of his saintly master. In his own outspoken manner, he once declared publicly from the pulpit, that he "was not worthy to loose the latchets of the shoes of him, who but a week since had preached from that same pulpit." Moreover, he would send to the Saint for further spiritual direction, such persons as had bared their conscience to him in a general confession.

Hofbauer was never a sensational preacher like Werner; but

he, too, came to be regarded more and more as a new phenomenon in the pulpits of Vienna. A police-report of 1815 repeats a remark current among the people: "Hofbauer always draws an immense crowd to his sermons: he is Father Abraham à Santa Clara come back to life."

Both preachers were closely shadowed by the police during the time of the Congress. It was not so much their sermons that inspired this vigilance, as a desire to discover their exact relations with the Jesuits. The restoration of the Society of Jesus by Pope Pius VII, in 1814, had struck terror into the Austrian Government and the ranks of the "Illuminati." The Jesuit specter had reappeared, and the authorities were at once on their guard. The police were tireless in their efforts to learn what was the attitude of the social circles in Vienna toward the Jesuit question. Numerous police-reports, belonging to this period, have reference to this very matter. The secret police force, established by Joseph II, attained its perfection during the time of the Congress. Its methods were improved and its personnel increased. At this period, persons in every walk of life — janitors and chambermaids, as well as members of the aristocracy — were in the employ of the secret service. Detectives not only attended the sermons preached by Hofbauer and Werner, but were on their trail at almost every turn.

Our Saint, it seems, in spite of his knowledge of men, was not always a match for these shrewd spies. One of them at last wormed his way into his confidence, had him say Masses for stipends obtained from the police department, succeeded in getting a copy of the Rule of the Congregation from him, and was able to repeat many remarks that the Saint had let fall in confidence. A certain Canon, too, gave the police some information about Hofbauer.

The President of the Police Department at Court, Baron Hager, no doubt had some difficulty in trying to make the conflicting reports of his emissaries harmonize. One of these detectives represents Hofbauer as a harmless, good-natured hypocrite, whose only aim was to extort alms from his rich penitents, and so be able to lead an easy and comfortable life. Another seriously warns the Department against this talented and ex-

tremely cunning man. The utterances about the Society of Jesus which the spies frequently elicited from the Saint, were, as reported to headquarters, equally conflicting. According to one account, Hofbauer is bound body and soul to the Jesuits; according to another, he is reported to have passed remarks indicating that the restoration of this Society had proved an obstacle to the execution of his own plans. The upshot of all this spying and eavesdropping, which came to an end in 1815, was, that the Department finally concluded that Hofbauer was neither an ex-Jesuit nor a Paccanarist. "Hofbauer and Werner," Hager reported definitely to the Emperor, on November 4, 1815, "are religious fanatics, but there is no reason for believing that they are supporters of the Jesuits." Baron Penckler, however, whose correspondence with the Superior General of the Jesuits had been intercepted, was declared to be the chief champion of the Society of Jesus. The Emperor sent him a sharp reprimand.

The only disagreeable consequences of all these complaints against Hofbauer were, that he had to submit to a number of vexatious hearings concerning the presence of Fathers Sabelli and Forthuber, who had been residing in Vienna for the past two years. It was discovered, furthermore, that two students living with him, Francis Haetscher and Joseph Ritter von Libotzky, were studying theology privately, in violation of the laws regulating studies. Both young men had joined Hofbauer, in 1813 or 1814, as Novices, and since then had resided with him.

The civil authorities did not seriously attempt to prohibit the sermons either of Hofbauer or of Werner. The existing regulations concerning church services could have been invoked to justify interference here, for Hofbauer preached oftener than the law permitted in convent-churches, and Werner, as a stranger and itinerant priest in the city, was not, strictly speaking, allowed to preach at all. But Hohenwart, who was on very intimate terms with the Emperor, had given him permission to preach, and nothing could be done against him. Hager, it is true, made a timid but ineffectual attempt to induce the Emperor to prohibit Werner's preaching. The Emperor, on April 25, 1815, merely replied that Werner should

be kept under strict surveillance, but that he was in no way to be molested.

The opposition of some members of the local clergy against the two novel preachers, was really more to be feared than any interference on the part of the government officials. In what way the hostility of these zealous reverend gentlemen manifested itself, it is impossible to say, as they evidently shunned the light of day. A letter of the Nuncio's to Rome leaves much to surmise. On February 28, 1815, Severoli reported a strange remark by Werner, to the effect that "these persecutions" had awakened in him a sort of sympathy for Luther, since he himself now knew from actual experience that no persecutions were so apt to drive one to desperation as those which are inspired by one's fellow-priests. In spite of this opposition, however, Werner was not molested, and continued to preach.

But Hofbauer did not escape so easily. In the fall of the year a storm broke out against him, and, in September, 1815, the Archbishop without previous warning ordered him to cease preaching at St. Ursula's. The circumstances that led up to this prohibition to preach are not known. That Hohenwart was not to blame is certain. The Archbishop's esteem for the Saint extended to him even as a preacher, though, perhaps, as a keen critic, he found some fault with his manner of delivery. The aged prelate, no doubt, had to yield to pressure brought to bear upon him by his consistory, in which, it seems, the "Illuminati" had some rather strong sympathizers. A police-report of those days calls special attention to the friendly relations which existed between Hohenwart and Hofbauer, and states explicitly that scarcely a week passed without the latter's receiving an invitation to dine at the episcopal palace.

The chagrin of Hofbauer's friends, on hearing of the Archbishop's prohibition, can readily be understood. Dorothy Schlegel attributed it to the "persecutions of the Pharisees of this place." In a letter written to the Countess Fuchs, on September 18, Pilat speaks of it at some length: "I am not a little vexed over something that came to my knowledge yesterday, and that is sure to be a source of sincere grief to you, my dear, as it is to me. In a letter delivered yesterday,

the Archbishop, with all possible courtesy, informs Father Hofbauer that with the first of next month he must cease preaching at the Church of the Ursulines. Can any greater malice be imagined than these machinations against this truly saintly man, against whom, for quite some time past, all sorts of chicanery have been practised? And why is he thus persecuted? Simply because he is too pious and good for them, and not sufficiently fond of the vagaries of the 'Illuminati.' I cannot tell you, my dear, how this news pains and afflicts me. I had grown accustomed to his sermons, so beautiful in their simplicity that they pleased me more than the ornate and ponderous preaching of so many other vain clergymen. My wife, too, is very much grieved over it. Say nothing to any one about it, my dear, as no one would understand what we mean in any case. But from you I could not conceal this sorrow."

On September 24, Pilat wrote: "Father Hofbauer preached for the last time to-day. With pious resignation and imperturbable calm he announced at the close of the sermon, that hereafter there will be no sermon on Sundays. I cannot find words to express my regret at being obliged to forego the consolation and the strengthening in the faith which I always derived from his sermons. I fear that he will soon leave Vienna, never to return, if they continue to treat him so shamefully. This would be a terrible blow to me and mine."

The calm and apparent indifference with which Hofbauer announced the discontinuance of his Sunday sermons did not betoken his actual feelings. The prohibition cut keenly and deeply into his heart, not so much because of the humiliation which it entailed, but because it wrested from his hands his chief weapon against the enemies of the faith. Preaching was one of the passions of his life. A few days after receiving this prohibition to preach, an Ursuline nun requested him to bless a picture for her. Hofbauer took it to the window to examine it more closely. It was a picture representing the Saviour preaching to the multitudes. The sight opened the wound in his heart anew: tears started forth from his eyes and coursed down his cheeks, so that the nun, wondering at the cause of his sorrow, became quite bewildered. This nun, and after her all the Saint's biographers, claims that the pro-

hibition to preach was revoked a week later; but this is not true: the pulpit remained closed to him an entire year.[8] Werner feared that the same fate was about to be meted out to himself. He threatened to leave Vienna the moment he was forbidden to enter the pulpit. His departure, surely, would have caused his opponents not the least regret. But matters did not come to this pass. In 1816, we find him preaching the Lenten sermons for Hofbauer at St. Ursula's.

Simultaneously with the guests at the Congress many old and new friends of the Saint left Vienna. "The Petitioners" and the Schlossers returned to Frankfort. Moreover, the Schlegel Circle disbanded at this time. Philip Veit settled in Rome, in August, 1815. Nina Hartl, too, had been in Rome since the fall of 1814, recuperating there after an illness, and, in 1816, she made her permanent abode in that city. Frederick Schlegel was appointed Secretary to the Legation of the Austrian Plenipotentiary in Frankfort. At the Diet of Frankfort, which was expected to bring the German Church question to a satisfactory solution, he regarded the defense of the rights of the Church as his chief duty.[9] The Holy Father honored Schlegel by conferring on him the Cross of Christ in recognition of his services to religion. This was done at the express wish and recommendation of Hofbauer. Werner and Pilat also received marks of recognition from Rome; and even for Overbeck a word of encouragement from the Pope was requested by Vienna.

The Emperor gladly consented to let Schlegel accept the rare distinction, — at the time there was no one in Vienna that

[8] On October 20, 1816, Pilat wrote to the Countess Fuchs: "Father Hofbauer will preach to-day, the Feast of the Dedication of the Church. I am rejoicing over it. It is now a year since he has preached."

[9] Severoli wrote to Consalvi, on July 5, 1815: "In Schlegel the Church has a devoted son; he is eminently fitted to handle all matters pertaining to the Holy See and to the German Church. You will remember that before your departure from Vienna, he promised to put some of his ideas in writing; *sed nosti hominis tarditatem,* — he has not yet put a pen to paper!" The Nuncio mentions that Schlegel had orally advocated the erection of two Nunciatures: one for Southern Germany, not in Bavaria, but rather in Ellwangen (in Wuerttemberg); the other, either in Hanover or Muenster, for Northern Germany; furthermore, an Extraordinary Legate at the Congress of Frankfort. (Archives of the Nunciature at Vienna. — Severoli, *Dispacci alla Segretaria di Stato. 1814–1816.*)

had it, — and in Catholic circles the honor conferred upon Schlegel was hailed with joy. On November 15, Severoli reported to Rome: "Schlegel will leave for Frankfort within two days. To-morrow I shall decorate him with the Cross of Christ. . . . He is a man of the highest principles, full of zeal for our Holy Catholic Church, and in favor not only with Prince Metternich, who has selected him, but likewise throughout Germany, where he is esteemed as one of the nation's most learned men."

Dorothy still tarried in Vienna. It was probably Hofbauer who secured accommodations for her at the house of Count Széchényi, where she resided during the next few months. While the Congress was in session at Vienna, a more intimate relationship had sprung up between Count Széchényi and Father Hofbauer. A few words about the former will not be out of place here.

The Magyars number Francis Széchényi among the greatest personages of their nation. They honor in him the staunch patriot and able statesman, the indefatigable promoter of Hungarian culture, and the founder of the Hungarian National Museum. Devoted to science from his youth, he had collected both at home and on his travels abroad a vast amount of valuable material for a future history of Hungarian culture. All this he presented to his fellow-countrymen in 1802, to serve as a nucleus for a National Museum. Great as a scientist, he was even greater in character. The outstanding traits of his race — intellectual independence and a deep religious spirit — shone forth in him with undimmed radiance.[10] His wife, the Countess Juliana, née Festetics, was an aunt of Julia Zichy and, like her husband, of noble birth. Hofbauer declared that the extraordinary virtues of this woman were a constant source of edification to him. When the Count ceased collecting materials for his history, religion became more and more the dominant element of his life. A great deal of his time was spent in prayer and in visits to the church. Impaired

[10] He fell into disfavor with Joseph II. In 1785, he handed to the Emperor his resignation from all the offices he had hitherto filled; and he did not again enter upon a political career until 1798. Széchényi made his studies at the Theresianum in Vienna. Hohenwart and Denis were among his professors; the latter proudly referred to him as his favorite pupil.

vision eventually obliged him to resign from all offices of responsibility, and, in 1811, he settled in Vienna. In 1814, he acquired the ownership of a palace on the main road, which, owing to the boundless hospitality of the wealthy Hungarian magnate, soon became the rendezvous of a staunchly Catholic group of people of rank in Vienna. In a letter to her sons in Rome, Dorothy Schlegel gives a charming description of the family life of the Széchényis. " I should never have imagined," she writes, " that there could be found anywhere in this wide world, and least of all here in Vienna, such splendor combined with such delightful simplicity, such cordiality and solicitude for one's wants coupled with such poise and ease of manner, so beneficent an exercise of parental authority over all the members of the family going hand in hand with so liberal and ready a recognition of the personal liberty of the individual, or, finally, a humility and devotion so truly Christian joined to so high a degree of culture and intellectual activity; in a word, I have found here an atmosphere of genuine nobility and refinement that knows nothing of the commonplace and therefore never descends to it. The Count is about sixty years of age, and bears a strong resemblance in his features to the well-known portrait of Count Frederick Leopold von Stolberg, with the exception that his eyes are not so sparkling, as he suffers much from an affliction which, it is feared, has developed into an incurable cataract. He is meekness and love itself. He is gifted with a well-ordered and cultivated mind, a veritable store-house of knowledge, and is particularly keen in business matters. . . . The Countess is a woman of perhaps fifty years, a very pious, refined, prudent, sensible, learned woman, and while she is extremely plain in her manner of living, she possesses all the polish of the great and cultured people of the world. She is tenderly devoted to her husband, and is constantly attentive to his wants. Their numerous children and relatives bestow upon them an almost patriarchal esteem and reverence. I can never tire admiring their mutual love and confidence, the respect and tenderness of their conversation, and their attentiveness to each other."

The Count found his greatest delight in attracting to his home priests distinguished for their virtue and zeal; but among

all the clergy that he welcomed to his house, his real confidant was Father Hofbauer. The whole family was attached to the Saint with childlike devotion, particularly the Countess Juliana and the daughter Frances, who by her marriage became the Countess Batthyányi. To the Count, who suffered much from bodily ailments, Hofbauer's visits were as a balm of consolation. The two men were of about the same age, and in consequence of their mature knowledge of life, understood each other best. The Count was preparing a work in German "On the Trend of the Times," which, very likely, suggested many an interesting topic for conversation. Hofbauer often read aloud to him. The Saint must have been a frequent visitor here, for a police-report erroneously claimed that Hofbauer lived with Count Széchényi. Werner, Penckler, Julia Zichy and, later on, also Pilat were regular guests of this family; and as time went on the Nuncio and the aged Count were linked in the closest bonds of friendship. The beautiful palace on the main road thus became the rendezvous of a strictly Catholic society which to a certain extent replaced the Schlegel Circle. Dorothy remained here until April, 1816; she then left Vienna to join her husband in Frankfort. She never had the pleasure of seeing the Saint again in this life.

CHAPTER V

THE YEARS 1815 TO 1818 — CARES AND LABORS FOR THE CHURCH IN GERMANY AND FOR THE TRANSALPINE CONGREGATION

THE results of the Congress of Vienna proved to be a double disappointment for Father Hofbauer. Not only had there been no serious attempt to settle the Church questions in Germany, but the prospects for the advancement of his own Congregation remained as unpromising as ever. He had looked forward to the solution of these matters as foregone conclusions. Even so early as the first days of the Congress, on November 8, 1814, he had written to one of his brethren in Italy: "We hope soon to gather our scattered forces and to be able again to live in community." But this wished-for consummation was conditioned upon the restoration of the annexed Catholic Governments of Southern Germany to their original status, and this restoration had not ensued. Shortly after the Congress, it is true, he had been requested to send several of the Fathers as chaplains to Dresden. Severoli favored his accepting this offer, but the Saint adhered to his previous resolution of not sacrificing the services of individual Fathers until such time as he had been able to establish a foundation of the Congregation. "I should gladly have consented," he wrote to Cardinal Litta, in reference to this matter, "had we possessed a convent of our own in Germany. Dresden, the metropolis of Saxony, would be a suitable center for us. I trust, however, soon to obtain a House in Alsace (which then belonged to France) for our scattered community, for the brethren must be reassembled and renewed in the spirit of their vocation." (July 29, 1816.)

The reader will recall that some time previously to this, the Nuncio had sponsored a plan for sending the Redemptorists as missionaries to Wallachia. Severoli was now induced to take up his project anew, for the Passionist missions in

Bucharest, in consequence of several casualties among the Fathers, were considerably crippled. Of the six missionaries, three had died in quick succession of the pestilence, among them the able Bishop Ferreri, "a gem of a priest"; and the three survivors were also attacked by the disease. As Prefect of the Propaganda, Cardinal Litta's first plan was to entrust the missions to the Redemptorists and to send Hofbauer as Bishop to Bucharest; but as there was still some prospect that the Passionists would be able to fill the vacancies with their own Fathers, he proposed sending Father Hofbauer as Bishop, and leaving the missions in charge of the Passionists. Severoli, after several lengthy consultations with the Saint, informed Cardinal Litta that this plan could be carried out only with the greatest difficulty. A Redemptorist as Bishop, Passionists as missionaries, and Franciscans as pastors — such would have been the situation, had the plan been executed, and constant friction would almost surely have been the result. Hofbauer was willing to induce one of his Fathers to accept the Bishopric, provided Redemptorists were permitted to accompany him as missionaries. Severoli agreed with him in contending that the local clergy should be uniformly of the same Religious Order. "Your Eminence knows Father Hofbauer," he wrote, "and you are aware that he makes this a condition for acceptance, only because he wishes to preserve harmony of action between the Bishop, the missionaries, and the faithful." Litta hereupon relinquished the entire plan, chiefly, he replied to Severoli, because Hofbauer was needed in Germany. All this transpired in the spring of 1815, when the question of filling the vacant German bishoprics was engaging the attention of all. For a long time past Litta had kept the vacant bishopric of Sophia in view for the Redemptorists. Hofbauer proposed Father Podgórski as Bishop, and summoned him to Vienna to talk the matter over. He found it altogether impossible, however, to prevail upon the good Father to accept the proffered dignity, and so this project likewise came to nothing.

The Passionist Fortunato Ercolani, hitherto Vicar-General of Ferreri, was appointed his successor. Ercolani at once implored the Saint to let some of his Fathers accompany him to

his diocese. His pleadings were at first unsuccessful; but the gloomy picture which he drew of the extreme misery and abandonment of the Catholics in the Balkans, and above all his positive promise that the Fathers would at once be given a house where they could live according to their Rule and whence they could go forth to labor according to their accepted methods, finally led the Saint to consent. The Nuncio was utterly astounded on learning that Hofbauer had decided to let Father Forthuber, who was still in Vienna, the two clerics Haetscher and Libotzky, and Brother Matthias Widhalm accompany the Bishop to Wallachia. Severoli had his serious misgivings about the wisdom of this new venture. The four Redemptorists were to form the nucleus of a new foundation. With a mother's solicitude, the Saint himself supplied his missionaries abundantly with all things needful. What he gave them to take along, he wrote to Father Giattini, would have been more than sufficient to establish an entire convent in Italy. Ercolani left with additional gifts from Hofbauer and Count Széchényi. Libotzky made his religious profession on September 27: he was the only Redemptorist whom Hofbauer permitted to pronounce his vows in Vienna. Ercolani was consecrated Bishop in the Church of St. Charles in Vienna, early in October, and on the sixth of the same month, the missionaries began their voyage on the Danube. Severoli insisted on going to the dock to bid them farewell and impart to them his episcopal blessing. "It is sure to prove a very pious and edifying party," Severoli wrote to Rome. The travelers were followed by Hofbauer's most cordial prayers and good wishes. The thought that they were going to instruct an ignorant people in the way of virtue and truth filled him with a holy joy. "Father Hofbauer has but one aim in life — to live and labor to instruct others," Severoli wrote to Cardinal Litta that very day. "I really believe that he will yet run away from us in order to visit his new colony in Wallachia."

The Saint was very much attached to all the members of this group, and their departure from Vienna cost him many a heartache. He missed the consolation of their companionship the more, as at this very time several trials gathered darkly about him. Shortly before this he himself had been forbidden to

preach, and Sabelli was obliged to go to Switzerland. Writing to her sons in Rome toward the end of October, Dorothy Schlegel speaks of Hofbauer's sentiments at this time: " Father Hofbauer and Martin Stark are again entirely alone. The good Father is now quite happy again; but for some time after the departure of the missionaries, he was very sad and depressed, owing partly to the sorrow of the separation and partly to the great amount of trouble and persecution which he had to encounter. The patience and humility of our dear spiritual Father in spite of all these untoward circumstances are truly admirable and most inspiring."

It was several weeks before the missionaries arrived at their destination. " They were delayed on the way," we learn from a report which Severoli sent to Rome, " by the extraordinary amount of luggage they brought along with them." In Wallachia they met with bitter disappointments. Ercolani had indeed promised to fit up his own house as a convent for the Redemptorists and to provide for their maintenance. But Ercolani was as imprudent as he was zealous, and in this case his zeal had overreached itself; possessing little foresight, he had made promises which he could not fulfill. His " residence " in Ciople, a Catholic village in the vicinity of Bucharest, was nothing but a wretched mud-house, thatched with reeds. The Passionists and the Redemptorists had to share its four small rooms, but they lived together in brotherly harmony, " as sons of one and the same father." The fears which Severoli had entertained for this mission in Wallachia did not, fortunately, prove to be justified; nevertheless, the young religious longed for the charm of a regular life and a fixed order of the day, and both these things were out of all question here at Ciople. The Bishop was everything for the Catholics of the place — priest, judge, and physician — so that at his house there was a constant coming and going. Hofbauer became not a little provoked at the Bishop. He wrote to Father Giattini that he had ceased hoping for good results from the enterprise: " Where I see a lack of sincerity, or at least discover deception in so important a matter, I do not hope for anything." News from Wallachia, however, restored his confidence and reconciled him to the situation. In view of the dire need of

priests, the ordination of the two clerics was advanced. They were ordained in January, 1816. The youthful missionaries entered upon their labors with enthusiastic fervor. Forthuber was appointed assistant to the Pastor at Bucharest, a Franciscan, and to the delight of the German Catholics immediately began to preach and catechize in German. No German sermon had been heard in Bucharest for the past fourteen years. Forthuber, moreover, taught school, at first in the open, later in a small house rented for this purpose. Libotzky and Haetscher, both fine linguists, found plenty of work among the French and Italians. From Ciople as a center, the Fathers set out on missionary tours to the north and to the south, even traveling as far as Bulgaria. Hofbauer was much pleased with this good beginning, as he wrote to Frederick Schlosser in Frankfort: "I thank God that the Bishop deceived me, for I could not, in conscience, have allowed my brethren to go with him had I known the actual circumstances." From the reports received from the missionaries he realized what a rich harvest was beckoning to his Congregation in that country. Writing to Sophia Schlosser he described in gruesome language the sad neglect of religion in Bucharest: "The city is the refuge of the vagabonds of all nations; it is a wilderness which, as it were, is become the lair of all manner of wild beasts. Among the people the most appalling ignorance prevails concerning matters pertaining to eternal salvation. They lead a reckless life, are quite indifferent about any one's religious tenets, and seem to understand only how to squander in idle pleasures what they have saved. Parents, it would seem, feed their children only to see them grow up and able to work and earn money. The consequence is that good Father Joseph (Forthuber) is constantly running about, begging the parents to permit their children to go to school. . . . Thus far God has made use of his simplicity of heart to effect a great change in the morals of the people." The Vicar-General waxed ever more and more enthusiastic over this new mission. Again he began to dream dreams, and to project the boldest and most far-reaching plans. He persuaded himself that Bucharest could be made into a new St. Benno's. He believed that his Fathers, laboring from this point as a center,

could eventually effect the conversion of the Wallachians, the Bulgarians and the Greeks and bring them back to the Church; and that later on, it would be quite possible to establish a second center in the Balkans, and thence conduct missionary expeditions into the Orient. But the indispensable condition attaching to all these fine plans was a Convent of his own with a church and a school at Bucharest. He approached the Nuncio repeatedly with requests for raising the necessary funds for establishing such a foundation. A letter to the Nuncio, under date of March 15, 1816, contains his ideas in brief. He begs the Nuncio's pardon for presenting his views in writing, offering as an excuse for so doing the importance of the question under discussion, which is none other than the salvation of immortal souls. No one, he says, is in better position to advance this project than the Nuncio. Would he not, then, become for the poor people of Wallachia what St. Gregory the Great became for England? And then he continues: "Is such a thing perhaps impossible in this our day? Has the arm of the Almighty been shortened, or has the Holy Ghost forgotten His mission in these times of ours?" Hofbauer placed the greatest stress on the manner of conducting the divine services; these, he claimed, should be surrounded with all possible magnificence and solemnity, as only in this way could this ignorant people be attracted to the Church of God. He protested that he would withdraw his missionaries from Wallachia, if they were not given a free hand in this matter, since they disliked a service that is cold and conducted without life or spirit. Among other things which he enumerates as necessities, he mentions a printing establishment for the Wallachians, the Greeks, and the Bulgarians. He closes his letter with this mischievous pleasantry: "May the Blessed Virgin let you suffer all manner of mental agony and remorse of conscience until you have used all your influence and exerted all your energy to provide everything that is needed for the salvation of this people! To my way of thinking there is not the shadow of a doubt that this is a work to which Your Eminence is being specially called by God. As often as I come into your presence, I feel an irresistible urge to speak on this subject, even when I have previously resolved not to speak

of it. Again and again, before being admitted to an audience with you, I have made the sign of the cross on my heart and lips that I might refrain from mentioning this topic; but each time I felt the more impelled to speak of it, and I can truthfully say that as often as I did, I have never regretted doing so, although by so constantly recurring to it, I may at times have become quite burdensome to you."

It was through no fault of the Nuncio that affairs in Wallachia did not develop according to Hofbauer's hope and wishes. The fault rested partly with Bishop Ercolani. The latter first of all made himself so odious by imprudently meddling in politics, that he was not even admitted to tender his New Year's greetings to the Ruler of Wallachia. The Bishop furthermore antagonized the Franciscans, who were in charge of several of the parishes and who divined his intention of gradually replacing them by the Redemptorists, and created public sentiment against him. The Pastor of Bucharest accordingly summoned a priest of his own Order to preach the German Lenten Sermons, and sent Forthuber back to Ciople as no longer needed there. Being in dire distress at the time, Ercolani soon lost all courage and longed to be back in the quiet of his convent. In May, 1816, he delegated his Vicar-General, Father Agostino, a full brother of his, to go to Rome to place before the Propaganda a plan for transferring all the missions in his diocese to the Redemptorists. He traveled by way of Vienna where he consulted with Hofbauer. The Saint declared himself satisfied with the substance of the proposition, and promised his support. In a letter recommending Agostino to Father Giattini, he again urges the latter to assist him in obtaining a college in Rome. With a training-school in the Eternal City, he says, he should be able to pledge himself to place at the disposal of the Propaganda as many missionaries as might be required for the Balkans and later for Asia. "The Congregation of the Propaganda supports the missionaries all over the world; why not us also?" An old wound now broke open afresh: "If I had been listened to and supported years ago," he laments, "we should be able to supply all Germany and the whole of Wallachia with our missionaries to-day!" The Propaganda, however, did not look with

favor on the dismissal of the other missionaries under these conditions. Ercolani was exhorted to continue at his post, and a small annual contribution was assigned the Redemptorists at Ciople.

The Saint in a letter to Cardinal Litta, dated July 29, 1816, explains why he himself did not go to Wallachia to unravel the tangled skein of conditions there. "I cannot under any consideration leave Germany, for it is in far greater danger now than it was even in the time of Luther. A malignant cancer is gnawing at its very vitals, threatening to destroy it, not openly as formerly, but secretly. The real source of all the evil that is robbing not only its own people, but many other nations as well, of the faith, of grace, and of purity of morals, is to be found here in Germany. From this country more than all others, the iniquity is flowing in tainted streams. Our first duty, therefore, is to bank up and avert the course of these death-dealing waters, especially in this country. The people are well-disposed and could in a short time and with little difficulty be won over to the cause of right and truth, if only we were permitted to apply the proper remedies to their ills." He begs His Eminence to pray that the wolves of hell be forbidden to approach and be no longer suffered to devastate this chosen vineyard which Our Lord and Saviour bought at so dear a price.

These sharp words were directed chiefly at Wessenberg, who, at Frankfort, the seat of the Diet, was now bending all his energies to win over the German Governments to a joint Concordat. Helfferich had also established his headquarters at Frankfort. The "little man," as Hofbauer familiarly called him, always kept close upon the heels of Wessenberg, and fought him whenever and wherever he could. Helfferich, the Schlegels and the Schlossers now formed the center of the party opposed to Wessenberg. For the time being their most potent weapons of defense consisted in keeping Rome minutely and constantly informed of all that took place in Germany. Vienna was the medium of communication with Rome: the palace of the Nuncio and that of the Count Széchényi had become, as it were, the news-centers from which the Holy See drew its information. The Count, advanced in years though

he was, now evinced the liveliest interest in the German Church question. With Helfferich, whom he had not as yet met in person, he formed a friendship by letter. News items and other available material that arrived from Frankfort, such as reports and pamphlets, were copied and translated in Vienna and forwarded to the Roman Curia. Hofbauer assigned two of his Fathers to this work, and the Servites on the Rossau also assisted. In this way Hofbauer continued to keep well-informed on the state of affairs; but the knowledge he thus acquired was for him a fruitful source of interior suffering. The reports from Frankfort were ominous. "The power of the enemy here is very great, the Church and its adherents are merely tolerated, and that only with evident ill-will." Thus wrote Dorothy Schlegel to Széchényi. "Nothing less than the very existence of the Church is at stake."[1] "The news from Germany, and particularly from Frankfort, could not be more disheartening," Severoli reported to Cardinal Consalvi. "In Frankfort, and indeed throughout all Germany, they are talking of a religious system that will be entirely independent of Rome; in fact, the establishment of a church that will be neither Catholic nor Lutheran seems imminent." More persistently than ever Schlegel pleaded for a Papal Delegate to Frankfort, who could give support and encouragement to those who were laboring against great odds for an adjustment favorable to the Church. Severoli seconded these pleadings of Schlegel, and urged that a papal representative be sent to Frankfort. "The disorder in Frankfort is rapidly reaching a climax," he wrote. "If Your Eminence could but read the letters that I and my friends receive from private individuals in Germany, you would agree that no time is to be lost in acceding to our request for a representative of the Holy See." But the reply that Rome had not as yet definitely decided upon the appointment of a Legate, shattered all his hopes.

Wessenberg's schemes seemed at first to be succeeding. Metternich was won over to his views. The idea of seeing the Josephist State Church System extended to the whole of Germany caught the fancy of the Austrian statesman. Ultimately, however, the plan of a General German Concordat failed com-

[1] Bleyer, p. 34.

pletely, owing to the invincible opposition of Bavaria and Wuerttemberg. Still, this did not substantially change the situation, for Wessenberg only redoubled his efforts to influence the proceedings, which now got under way, for the formation of the Concordats of the individual States.

Helfferich came to Vienna toward the end of November, 1816, and remained there as the guest of Count Széchényi till the beginning of 1818. Within this period, according to the express declaration of a police-report, he twice journeyed to Rome. The situation in matters ecclesiastical, up till then tense to the snapping-point, relaxed somewhat with the death of the Prince-Primate Dalberg, which occurred on February 10, 1817. Through the influence of the saintly Regent Wittmann, of Ratisbon, Dalberg, the actual originator of the Wessenberg policy, had recognized the fatal error of that policy, and departed this life sincerely contrite of heart. Hofbauer saw his fervent prayers for the conversion of this man answered. Dalberg's death and the preliminary negotiations of the Bavarian Concordat, reopened the question of the episcopal appointments. In March, 1817, the Nuncio reported to the Secretary of State: "I can say that I am daily in conference here with those that are favorably inclined to our views. The future Bishops of Bavaria are the topics we have under consideration. If the names of those proposed were made known in time, these persons could furnish much valuable information." In a lengthy letter of March 17 to the Crown Prince of Bavaria, Hofbauer makes no attempt to conceal his apprehension regarding the next occupant of the Archiepiscopal See of Ratisbon. During the incumbency of the aged Dalberg, he writes, an unprincipled school of men labored to besmirch and debase the spirit of the Church; the aims of this school were worse than mere secularization, for it was in league with a certain occult party which, under the mask of Christianity, was endeavoring to do away with the external worship of the Church and the very means of salvation. "Bavaria is now the only Catholic Kingdom in Germany. Of what spirit will its future Archbishop be? Will he be perhaps a secret, masked creature of this school?" He is urged, he says, by an interior, irresistible impulse, to recom-

mend as a reliable incumbent for this post Baron Francis von Wambold.[2]

The person referred to here as the "masked creature" of the Wessenberg and Pseudo-mystic Party was probably John Michael Sailer, who at this time was being put forward in many quarters as a strong candidate for one of the future bishoprics of Bavaria. In 1799, a year after Hofbauer had visited him in his solitude at Ebersberg near Muenster, Sailer was called to a professorship in the University of Ingolstadt, and shortly afterward to Landshut. His fame and his following had increased from year to year; but the opinions regarding his mental attitude on church questions were more

[2] About three weeks previously Hofbauer, in a lengthy letter written in Italian, had recourse to a Roman Cardinal — either Litta or Consalvi — in regard to the same matter. (See Haringer, note 2, p. 302; and Innerkofler, note 2, p. 707.) In this letter the Saint fearlessly speaks out his mind. Here again, as in his letter to the Crown Prince, he recommends Baron von Wambold as a thoroughly worthy candidate; and then he adds a few remarks which he requests His Eminence not to take amiss. The nobility in the Church of Germany, he says, after squandering the goods of the Church in so shameful a manner, has been reduced to a wretched state; in fact, when people now wish to represent anything as odious or ridiculous or to brand some one as a wayward son, they make use of the expression, "a titled Canon." Still, he goes on, we must bow to the great ones so far as this may be done without doing harm to the Church of God; for this reason, too, I am recommending Baron von Wambold, as the Austrian ministers likewise will regard his appointment as very acceptable. Unless I deceive myself, I believe that I seek in all this nothing else than the honor and glory of God." — In a postscript to this letter, the Saint remarked that he was writing at the same time to the Crown Prince in regard to this matter. Haringer (see his *Life of Hofbauer,* p. 303, note 1) tried in vain, in 1865, to obtain from King Louis I of Bavaria this and other letters of Hofbauer's. I am in possession of a copy of the text of this letter, as also of the reply of the Crown Prince, taken from a private record. The passages quoted above have been taken from Hofbauer's letter, which bears the date of March 17, 1817. The brief reply of the Crown Prince, dated April 4, 1817, reads: "I am replying somewhat late to Your Reverence's letter in regard to the appointment of von Wambold. I should be very sorry, however, if on that account you thought me guilty of indifference either toward you or toward Baron von Wambold, two men whom I highly esteem. So far as I can judge, it has not as yet been decided who will be the Archbishop of Bavaria — and the election does not depend upon my choice; nevertheless, I firmly believe that a worthy person will be chosen in any case. It pleased me very much to make your acquaintance, and the memory of my visits with you will never be obliterated from my mind." — From other letters among those private records we learn that Hofbauer declared to Baron von Wambold that he should be in conscience bound to accept the nomination, if it fell upon him. But matters did not come to that pass.

conflicting than ever. Whatever had reference to Sailer proved of intense interest to Hofbauer, and he made it his business to follow up everything that even remotely affected the career of this man. Letters from pupils of Sailer, which were frequently submitted to him for inspection, served merely to confirm the Saint in his unfavorable opinion of the man. The Nuncio often mentioned Sailer in his reports to Rome, and his references to this much-discussed individual were invariably tinged with the disapproval with which he was regarded by Hofbauer, whose judgment of the man Severoli had probably made his own. As time went on, however, the Nuncio became more intimate with Helfferich and Job,[3] two staunch defenders of Sailer, and perhaps as a result of this intimacy, Severoli began to waver in his previous severe judgment of Sailer. Both Job and Helfferich, unlike Hofbauer, knew Sailer from personal association with the man; for this reason, the Nuncio perhaps relied more upon their judgment than upon the Saint's. Be that as it may, Severoli requested of all three a written statement of their opinion of Sailer so as to be able to form an unbiassed estimate of him. Not only Hofbauer, Helfferich, and Job, but Penckler as well, it seems, submitted written statements, as requested, but those of Penckler and Helfferich have hitherto not been made known. It is therefore impossible to say what were the chief points urged in Sailer's favor, for Hofbauer and Penckler were opponents of the man, while Helfferich and Job were, as we have said, his defenders.

In his statement, Hofbauer lays particular stress on the objections which for years had been urged against Sailer. He calls special attention to his suspicious relations with Wessenberg, with the Pseudo-mystics, and with the Protestants. The See of Augsburg had just become vacant, and Sailer was much

[3] Sebastian Job, of Bavaria, an equally learned and pious man, was summoned to Vienna in the beginning of 1817 as Confessor to the Empress. Job was likewise a member of the Catholic Circle that met at the home of Count Széchényi. Father Haringer remarks in a private letter, that he is convinced from various sources that Job was not a special friend of Hofbauer's. It is therefore all the more striking that, after Hofbauer's death, Job was the first one openly to acclaim the Saint "the Apostle of Vienna." The Saint, on his part, entertained a high esteem for this very fervent priest, and he often summoned him to St. Ursula's as extraordinary confessor.

spoken of at this time as its next incumbent. But Hofbauer feared, he said, that Sailer's appointment to the episcopacy would give occasion to serious ecclesiastical disorders, inasmuch as there were very few priests who would accept jurisdiction from him. "It is said," writes the Saint, "that he is more to be feared than Luther, since he attacks the Church covertly, whereas Luther's attacks were at least in the open."

There is no authentic biography of Sailer in existence. It is futile, therefore, to attempt to form anything like a definite opinion of him in this our own day. That Hofbauer's estimate of this man, in certain essential points, was incorrect, has already been shown in these pages. Apart from this, however, it seems certain that the Saint, even had he been in a position to form an objectively correct estimate of Sailer, would have objected for other reasons to his being raised to the episcopacy. Even Sebastian Job, Sailer's most ardent supporter and defender, had to admit that Sailer, "yielding too much to his natural kindness and gentleness of heart, or owing to an excessive desire to act prudently, or perhaps merely from our common human liability to err," did not always point out to non-Catholics the full Catholic truth as he should have done, and that, furthermore, he failed at times to use his authority to bring back those who were outside the pale of the Church.[4] This at least is an admission that Sailer was incompetent to perform one of the most urgent tasks of the time.

Nor did Sailer keep entirely aloof from that spirit of excessive tolerance which was so much the vogue during the régime of the "Illuminati." He had acquired an unusual amount of influence, but he neglected to use that influence to direct Catholics to the Pope and to guide the German Protestants to the Church. It is a very significant fact that in all his writings, which enjoyed a wide circulation throughout Germany, the Holy See was hardly ever mentioned; and while the assertion that he positively advised Protestant friends not to join the Church may be a misrepresentation, it is at all events certain, that he himself never led any one back to the true fold. What a striking contrast he here presents to Hof-

[4] Stoelzle, *J. M. Sailer*, p. 26.

bauer, from the first seeking out and bringing back "the sheep that were lost of the house of Israel," until he became the center of a noteworthy group of converts in the Germany of those days! But Sailer's whole life, and particularly his attitude toward those not of the true fold, was dominated by a maxim that was as unsound as it was inopportune: he seems to have persuaded himself that in dealing with prospective converts, it was the proper policy to emphasize, not what separated them from the Church, but rather what all Christian denominations still retained in common. As he understood this policy and allowed it to color his priestly activity, it wrought more harm than good. It was his misfortune that he was unable to realize, that truth, if it is to exert its full power and win the intellects of men to itself, must be revealed whole and entire, without diminution or addition, undraped with mystery, unveiled with shadows or darkness, unmasked with fear, knowing neither pretense nor disguise. The harm which he wrought in allowing this maxim to actuate him consisted not so much in inflicting new damage on the Church as in leaving undone a vast amount of good that he might otherwise have accomplished. Had Sailer combined with his other rare gifts the apostolic spirit of Hofbauer, there is no telling how far the Catholic movement might have spread in Protestant Germany. Severoli once wrote to Rome, that if everything that was said of Sailer were true, he could, with the extraordinary talents and the wide influence that were his, have converted the half of Germany. This habitual apathy, this lack of zeal, this apparent indifference from which Sailer seemed unable or unwilling to rouse himself, and which paralyzed the finest powers of his mind and soul, appears to have been the real reason that Hofbauer remained inaccessible to all the apologies of Sailer and that he could not overcome his aversion to this man. From whatever angle he sought to view the character and grasp the personality of Sailer, the Saint's judgment of this man was invariably influenced by what he knew of Sailer's questionable relations with persons of other denominations and Sailer's indifference to the diseased conditions within his own Church. In these two points, even Sailer's most ardent friends and admirers did not venture to

defend him, for even they realized that he was unquestionably at fault in both. To Hofbauer's mind this over-prudent yielding to the spirit of the times was the greatest objection to Sailer. The entire discussion assumed a practical aspect only two years later, when Sailer was seriously proposed for the bishopric of Augsburg. That Rome at the time refused to accept him, was owing chiefly to Hofbauer's objections. His critique on Sailer was undoubtedly surcharged with disapproval and at times shot over its mark; yet, it had its good effects, inasmuch as it forced Sailer eventually to emerge from his strange reticence regarding certain church questions and to show his true colors. Had he done so sooner, he could have been spared much sadness and mortification.[5]

Had Wessenberg now actually become Bishop of Constance, as it seemed very probable he would, incalculable harm would have resulted for the Church in Germany. Dalberg had appointed him his Coadjutor in 1814, and after Dalberg's death he was at once elected as his successor by the Chapter of Constance. In order personally to ensure his approbation by the Holy See, Wessenberg spent the entire second half-year of 1817 in Rome. All his exertions, however, proved fruitless. His nomination was resolutely rejected, and he was informed in no uncertain terms that the Roman Curia had complete and detailed information concerning him. For this information the Holy See was indebted especially to Hofbauer and his

[5] From Sailer's letter to Ringseis (August 25, 1820), quoted above (see page 131, note 6), it appears that Sailer was informed by Job of Hofbauer's unfavorable opinion of him, and to counteract this he sent an explanation in Latin to Nuncio Severoli (which is not identical with the one copied by Innerkofler, p. 715, note 2). Sailer became persuaded, as he wrote again to Ringseis, that Severoli had completely turned about in his favor. In Rome, however, whither Severoli had been summoned to receive the Cardinal's hat, in 1817, there seems to have been no change of sentiment toward Sailer. This appears from the fact that the question asked by the Bavarian Government, "whether Sailer's nomination for the bishopric was agreeable to the Holy Father," was answered in the negative. Hofbauer's judgment of Sailer, in 1817, was the deciding factor in his rejection by Rome; for Consalvi sent a copy of the Saint's deposition to the Bavarian Crown Prince in justification of the attitude of the Holy Father in declining to accept Sailer's nomination. (Compare the text of Consalvi's letter, in Innerkofler, p. 717, n. 2.) It is well known that Sailer finally received the miter. In 1822 he became Coadjutor, and in 1829 Bishop of Ratisbon. He died in 1832.

friends at Vienna and Frankfort, who, as we have seen, made it part of the service they rendered to religion, to keep the Curia apprised of all such matters. The importance of this service which the group of friends at Vienna performed, cannot be overestimated. Before the Congress of Vienna, Helfferich and Wambold were wont to ask the Swiss Nuncio to carry their requests and proposals to Rome. Since that time, Vienna had become the link between Frankfort and Rome. Helfferich's two journeys from Vienna to the Eternal City, the expenses of which were defrayed by Count Széchényi, were evidently inspired by a desire to offset the effect of Wessenberg's presence in Rome. During those critical times the Holy Father was kept constantly advised of the true state of affairs in Germany; and for this, considerable if not exclusive credit is due to our Saint. Hofbauer was the intimate confidant of the Nuncio, and it was through him especially that his friends made the acquaintance of the Nuncio in Vienna. No one was seen at the Nunciature more frequently than he. A police-report states positively that Hofbauer visited the Nuncio twice a day, which was probably true of many days.

The activities of Hofbauer and his friends were known in detail to the police. A report of those days claims that they formed an organization known as The Széchényi Club. "The Count," it declares, "is the President of the Club; Hofbauer, the Vice-President; Pilat, the Secretary; Job and Penckler, the most active members. The object of the Club is threefold: first and above all else, to establish and preserve the most intimate relationship with the Pope; second, to prevent or counteract every attempt of the Government to restrict the spiritual power of the Church; and finally, to destroy the fruits of the Reformation." The Felder newspaper is described as the official organ of the Club. The truth is that the friends who met at Széchényi's were organized to a certain extent. Twice a week, on the two days when the post brought the mail from Hungary, the entire group of friends dined with the Count, Hofbauer being usually conveyed thither in a carriage. After dinner various topics of interest were discussed. Next to the affairs bearing upon the welfare of the German Church, those having reference to the Church in his own native

Hungary interested the Count in an especial manner. Among other things, he exerted his influence in endeavoring to introduce the Jesuits and the Redemptorists into Hungary. The "Széchényi Club," moreover, established a system of communication with all their friends throughout the Empire. We find, for instance, that the day commemorating the Jubilee of the Reformation, October 31, 1817, was appointed as a day of prayer and penance for all the friends. The particular instructions concerning the manner of its observance were given out by Job under the assumed name of "Sylvester," in a circular letter sent on September 22 to all the friends in Bavaria, Suabia, and Franconia. A copy of this letter was intercepted by the authorities at Innsbruck, causing consternation among the police, who were amazed that the Club should have spread so rapidly over all Lower Germany as far as Westphalia. Széchényi was in constant touch also with Count Stolberg in Muenster; Dorothy Schlegel had established an epistolary correspondence between them. In view of the fact that at this time even harmless chess-clubs were broken up by the police, we must conclude that it was owing only to the great esteem which the aged Count enjoyed at Court, that the round-table at Széchényi's was left unmolested.

But let us return to the German Church questions. Wessenberg's rejection at Rome was indeed an agreeable victory; but it in no way marked the end of anxiety for the fervent Catholic party. Even though he returned to Germany defeated, the anger of his adherents remained a factor to be coped with. Negotiations for the establishment of an ecclesiastical Province of the Upper Rhine were about to begin, and as the Protestant Governments of that territory had set their minds on shaping the future policy of the Church in accordance with Wessenberg's ideas, there was every prospect of trouble ahead.

The Bavarian Concordat, concluded on October 24, 1817, was solemnly announced by the Holy Father in the Consistory of November 15; but its proclamation brought no thrill of joy to our Saint. The very name "Concordat" was offensive to his ears. This loyal son of the Church was not easily satisfied when the honor and the rights of his Mother were at stake.

The mere idea that the Church should be obliged to safeguard its God-given rights and privileges by means of long and wearisome negotiations with its own children, was to him an anomaly which filled his heart with unspeakable sadness. In the present instance he was right in regarding the Bavarian Concordat with serious misgivings; for the Munich Government had ratified the contract with the tacit reservation of the ancient rights of the Church, — a proviso which soon led to new and endless discussions with the Curia.

Blue skies were not yet to appear on the horizon of the German Church. Fresh clouds were gathering there. In 1817, the activities of the Pseudo-mystics spread so rapidly, especially in Southern Germany, that they attracted general attention. Hofbauer saw only a dark and dismal future ahead. He reveals the state of his mind in a letter written on January 27, 1818, to Severoli, who was then in Rome: "The situation here in Germany is constantly growing more dangerous. Our most urgent need is truly apostolic men, for the world no longer believes that there are still to be found good and virtuous priests with thoroughly Catholic convictions. Your Eminence will remember that I have constantly maintained that the people here and in Silesia are extremely docile and easily satisfied, but that they are at the same time the most neglected of all Germans and surrounded on all sides by heretics. And yet they have no bishops!!! "

The fanaticism which was everywhere gaining the upper hand, forced him to utter this complaint: "I am beginning to fear that Jesus Christ was speaking of our times, when He said: 'And there will rise up false prophets, and they shall shows signs and wonders.' (Mark, xiii.) I long to spend the rest of my days in solitude, for my heart is sore. . . . All the elements of wickedness, though at variance with one another, are uniting against Jesus Christ and His Church. And what are we doing? The reproaches and complaints which I am forced to hear from the good, pierce my heart, for I cannot deny that matters are really as bad as they represent them."

The fears of the Saint were not entirely without foundation. It is well known that in March, 1818, representatives from

several of the southern and northern German States met at Frankfort, and, abetted by Wessenberg, conferred upon the advisability of a concerted uprising against Rome. Helfferich now left Vienna and hastened back to Frankfort to take up anew the fight against Wessenberg and his party. He succeeded in procuring a copy of the secret original minutes of their conferences, and in many other ways pierced their armor and damaged their cause. In May he went to Munich. The Bavarian Government employed him as mediator in the negotiations, then in progress with Rome, regarding the execution of the terms of the Concordat. Job, who visited him in Munich, humorously writes to Count Széchényi: "The little man is here and is constantly bustling about. He is acting like another Napoleon, with this difference, that he is dealing out, not scepters and crowns, but miters and croziers. But, to be serious: this is the proper place for his zeal; here he is doing a splendid service to the good cause. If at times he gets a sharp thrust in the ribs, he turns about and, nothing daunted, strikes back as sharply at his adversary." [6] During the summer Helfferich sent frequent reports on the situation to the Nuncio at Vienna. His fears are betrayed in the language of these letters.[7]

On July 2, 1818, the Saint addressed to Pope Pius VII a petition for the Introduction of the Process of Canonization of the Blessed Alphonsus. Echoing Helfferich's gloomy reports on the condition of the Church, Hofbauer in this docu-

[6] Bleyer, p. 113.

[7] For example, *Observationes tristes ac ominosae de causa Ecclesiae Catholicae per foederatos Germaniae status,* Munich, June 29, 1818. In another letter to the Nuncio he says: "If by the inscrutable decree of Providence it should be appointed that my unfortunate fatherland share the lot of Asia and Africa, I consider it my most sacred duty to leave nothing undone that the remembrance of the Apostolic See remain *salva et sancta.*" In another letter there was enclosed a leaflet containing the well-known prayer for the preservation of the Faith ("O my Saviour, should the terrible time have come, etc."), with the remark in Helfferich's handwriting: "*Preces ardentissimae populi Monachiensis in hoc discrimine rerum.*" Hofbauer was generally considered to be the author of this prayer. The beginning of this prayer agrees in sentiment with the passage from his letter to Cardinal Severoli, quoted above. Perhaps the Saint composed this prayer at Helfferich's request for public devotion during the time of the Bavarian Concordat negotiations, from the fatal issue of which Helfferich feared a schism would result. (*Archives of the Nunciature at Vienna.*)

ment likewise expresses his fears that the rupture which has already occurred among German Catholics, will end in a general schism.

Hofbauer did not live to witness the final solution of the German Church problems, nor the glorious reflowering of ecclesiastical and religious life in Germany. He took with him down into the grave, his sadly beautiful anxiety for the future of the Church in his dearly-loved Germany.

We have not considered it irrelevant thus briefly to indicate the course of the German Church negotiations. Even if Hofbauer did not assist in shaping these events as an active statesman, as did his friend, the little Helfferich, he was at heart as keenly interested in them as perhaps no other man of his times. One of his disciples tells us that he once met him in the streets of Vienna; great worry was depicted on his countenance, and, without further introduction, he launched forth into a detailed enumeration of his fears for the Church in Germany. The news of any favorable turn of events, on the other hand, made him so happy that he would begin to sing. It is difficult to determine to just what extent the Saint, by deed or counsel, influenced the course of these events; and what he accomplished by the fervor of his incessant prayers, is known to God alone. We do know, however, that these years brought to him their portion of keen interior suffering. It is evidently to this period of his life that the following words of one of his most intimate disciples refer: "During his checkered career, Hofbauer must have suffered very much, not only from want and trouble, from heat and cold, but also from the great grieving of his heart, which was aglow with zeal for the salvation of mankind. His keenest sorrow in this respect I think I have almost divined; but this sorrow of his was of so peculiar and so truly Catholic a nature, that I had to refrain from even alluding to it." [8]

During these years the Saint's thoughts, laden with anxiety and suspense, traveled most frequently to Bucharest and to Frankfort-on-the-Main. Here his friends, and there his religious brethren, he knew, were fighting for the good cause against great odds and under unusual difficulties; and with

[8] Dr. Emmanuel Veith. (Brunner, *Hofbauer*, p. 278.)

these friends as well as with these brethren he kept in communication as constantly as he could. None of his letters to Bucharest has been preserved; and of those that formed his correspondence with his friends in Frankfort only a few have come down to us. He wrote to Schlegel, Helfferich, and Schlosser, encouraging them to labor for the welfare of the Church. "Let little Helfferich keep up his courage; it is God's work that he is doing!" The Schlossers had to endure not a little hardship in Frankfort since their conversion. The Saint consoled them: "I am not surprised that you are meeting with opposition. This is the portion of all who seek God with their whole heart." He eagerly looked forward to a visit with his friends in Frankfort. Indeed, his whole life was marked by an affection for his friends that was unusually tender in its solicitude, and that toward the end of his earthly career seemed to grow deeper, stronger, and daily more beautiful. A mistaken idea of sanctity and of the religious life oftentimes pictures the Saints as entirely divested of all human sentiment; with their growth in virtue and their advancement in the supernatural life of faith and grace, they are represented as losing all feeling for the world about them, all sympathy for their fellowmen, and all capacity for true friendship. The truth of the matter is, that this world knows no friendship so pure, so strong, so ennobling, and so enduring as the friendship which exists between holy souls. Hofbauer is a case in point. He seemed to belong entirely to a higher world; and yet we find him here anticipating the pleasure of a visit to his friends in Frankfort. "If you lived no farther away than Mariazell or Graetz, I should have visited you ere this," he wrote to Frederick Schlosser. "Perhaps I shall yet have the good fortune to spend a few days in your company, and also of affectionately embracing my good friend Christian, to whom I send my best wishes." And to Madame Schlosser he wrote: "How often do I not long to spend an evening with you! But as this is impossible, I already rejoice in the thought of those days of eternal happiness, when we shall be inseparably united with Jesus who loves us so tenderly."

It was sad news that Hofbauer had to send to Frankfort in November, 1816. Death had removed one of the noblest mem-

bers of his parish in the full bloom of her womanhood. On November 18, the Countess Julia Zichy had departed this life, shortly after giving birth to her fifth child. Hofbauer had attended her during her last moments. For months before the end came, the poor Countess had been tried as by fire by sufferings and tribulations. Hofbauer sent full particulars of her last illness and death to Frankfort: "Our devout Julia," he testified, "died like a Saint." He begged Schlosser to console Dorothy Schlegel, to whom the unexpected death of her friend was a terrible blow. And he himself sought to provide balm of comfort to the bereaved when he wrote: "We shall surely see her again in eternity where Jesus, our beloved Master, has prepared an abode for us in the house of our heavenly Father, and where there shall be no more separation forever. Beloved friends, in this land of exile we indeed frequently have reason to complain; but let us not lose heart; let us rather turn our gaze hopefully to our heavenly home, where our tears shall all be wiped away, and where God, our God, shall be our reward exceeding great! During this short life we indeed sow in tears. All our brethren who have gone before us and have happily reached their heavenly home, have sown in tears; now, in eternity, they are reaping in joy, even as we also shall reap in joy in a day that shall never end." [9]

The Countess Julia had scarcely been laid at rest, when her place was filled by another distinguished convert. During the Easter season of 1817, Augusta von Mengershausen, after hesitating a long time on the threshold of the faith, finally followed the example of her sisters, Madame von Pilat and Madame von Klinkowstroem, and entered the Church at Frankfort. In Vienna, the usual place of her residence, she had engaged in many a religious discussion with Hofbauer.

[9] One of Julia Zichy's last letters to Dorothy is a touching proof of her earnest striving after interior perfection (Raich, II. p. 376: August 31, 1816). She does not wish to be praised by her friend. Dorothy's letter, she declares, was the worst of poison for her: "It takes me fully two weeks after such words to banish your praises from my mind and to vanquish the temptations to lukewarmness and indifference which result therefrom. Such talk only makes it the harder for me to practise meekness and patience, for even at prayer vain thoughts creep upon me so very insidiously that I can hardly ward them off. I beg of you, for heaven's sake, not to be so partial and indulgent with me."

The doctrine of the Veneration of the Saints proved her main stumbling-block in the path to Rome. The Saint assured her that this difficulty ought not prevent her from becoming a Catholic; and indeed, after her conversion, all her objections to the Communion of Saints vanished out of sight. Years later Augusta entered the convent.

The Saint's close relations with Adam Mueller and his wife seem to have suffered an interruption during these years. After the war, the Emperor, on Metternich's recommendation, appointed Mueller Austrian Consul-General at Leipzig. With this appointment, Mueller's financial troubles came to an end, and his health, until then chronically poor, took on fresh vigor. On August 29, 1815, he wrote to Pilat: "Since yesterday at noon, when the appointment was made public, I have felt my health improving." In another sense, however, his new duties, demanding as they did his permanent residence in a city entirely Protestant, seem to have occasioned Mueller and his wife, who were both converts to Catholicity, not a little embarrassment. The Protestant atmosphere of their surroundings was surely not the best of tonics for their religious life. Klinkowstroem, who, on a journey to Goettingen, stopped over at Leipzig and paid a visit to the Muellers, expressed his fears in a letter to Pilat for their perseverance in the faith. As grounds for his fears he adduced certain remarks which Mueller and his wife had made; these, however, were not so serious as he interpreted them at the time.[10] Mueller was perturbed over the formation of what he termed a "Hofbauer Party" in opposition to Wessenberg and his followers. Representing Hofbauer and Schlegel as his chief opponents, he became so excited that he launched forth into a diatribe in French. Klinkowstroem endeavored to disabuse him of this mistaken notion, and remarked very aptly: "There is no such thing as a 'Hofbauer Party,' and if there were, its sole purpose would be to promote the religious life of its members by encouraging them in the devout use of the means of grace and in the fervent performance of their Christian duties; consequently, it would never be clothed in a repulsive exterior." As Klinkowstroem soon discovered, it was Metternich who had applied the match

[10] Compare "*Hochland*," XIX, 1921, 1922, No. XII, p. 693.

to Mueller's excitable nature. Shortly before this Metternich had written to Mueller in a tone of admonition: "P(ilat) very nearly instigated an open quarrel, which does not please me and for which I called him to task. On the other hand, I hear that S(chlegel) is preaching obscurantism in Frankfort. You, with your tact, will know best how to avoid both extremes. The importance of the cause for which you are fighting is so evident that it cannot but be weakened by the use of any but the ordinary legal procedure in the usual legal form." This warning against starting and espousing any definite ecclesiastical policy had its effect; no doubt, it was, as Klinkowstrom correctly surmised, the real reason for Mueller's agitation. Mueller was entirely dependent upon Metternich; and he probably feared that any undue activity in the political or the ecclesiastical arena on the part of his friends, especially on the part of Schlegel and Pilat, would react to his own detriment, particularly as he realized how distasteful any such activity was to the Prince. Be that as it may, the fears which Klinkowstroem had entertained concerning Mueller's staunch adherence to the Faith, proved to be unfounded. Mueller never showed any tendency toward weakening in his Catholic sentiments. His correspondence with Gentz, whose conversion he ardently desired, is ample proof of this. Nor did he ever fail in loyalty or devotion to his saintly friend in Vienna. How highly he esteemed Hofbauer, he himself has told us, for he declares, that while he had never wavered in his convictions since his conversion, he had not fully understood his Catholic religion until it was unfolded to him by Hofbauer.[11] His vehemence against what he chose to call "the Hofbauer Party" must therefore be ascribed rather to political expediency than to any lapse in his allegiance to the Church. And as for adherence to principle, there was no man of the Hofbauer circle who so staunchly defended the principle that Religion can never be left out of the reckoning, — not even in public politics and matters of State. The Articles in the

[11] In one of Mueller's letters of the year 1824 we read: "Cardinal Severoli knows best how he (Mueller) worked in union with Blessed Clement Hofbauer to defend the cause of Holy Mother Church, and knows too that he belongs to her in life and in death." (Baxa, *Adam H. Mueller,* II. p. 540.)

"Staats-Anzeiger," which he published at this time in Leipzig, are written entirely in this spirit.

If Mueller permitted himself to be intimidated by Metternich's admonition, he did so with good reason. Not long afterward Schlegel himself discovered to his own sorrow that the Prince was quite unapproachable concerning such matters. In 1817, he was suddenly deprived of his position as Secretary of the Legation, and, after scarcely two years' activity at the Diet, was ordered back to Vienna. This removal from office was caused not so much by disagreements with his superior as by the part he took in the political and church movements of those days, and particularly by his intimacy with Helfferich, who was heartily disliked by Metternich. His dismissal was more than a painful humiliation for Schlegel; on account of his usually precarious circumstances, it meant for him almost financial ruin. On November 24, 1817, he wrote to Széchényi: "Nothing remains to me now, but to help myself out of my financial need and embarrassment so that I may depart from here with honor unstained, and after that with renewed courage find a better and more certain means of support. All my friends at Vienna deeply sympathize with me; still, next to you, my kind benefactor, I place special confidence in Father Hofbauer. I beg Your Excellency, in your tender solicitude for us in our misfortune, to speak to no one but him concerning us. In the enclosed letter I lay open my whole heart to him, as well, at least, as this can be done from a distance."[12] Széchényi came to his rescue in a very substantial manner. He forwarded a draft for a large amount, and Schlegel, freed from immediate embarrassment, was permitted to postpone his return to Vienna. While Dorothy, in April, 1818, carried out her long-cherished intention of visiting her sons in Rome, Frederick remained at Frankfort until the end of the year.

One by one the Saint's friends had left Vienna to make their home in Rome. Princess Jablonowska, Hofbauer's greatest benefactress, also left in 1817, and settled in the Eternal City. In the same year, Severoli, relieved of his office as Nuncio at Vienna, was recalled to Rome, where, as a reward

[12] Bleyer, p. 100.

for his faithful services, the Cardinal's hat awaited him. For fifteen years he had filled his difficult post in the Austrian capital, and for as many years had been the staunch friend and supporter of Hofbauer. We need not repeat here the many services which the Nuncio rendered our Saint. The Nuncio, on his part, had no less reason for being grateful to Hofbauer. Severoli had not many friends in Vienna; in fact, he was rather disliked, not so much on account of his personal traits, as on account of the determined stand he took against the spirit of the times. In a letter to Consalvi he hints at the difficulties which he encountered: "I have nothing to do here in Vienna but to bark; but, to the honor of God, let me assure you that I have never shirked this distasteful duty. Regardless of enmities, of hardships, and of expense, I have barked, perhaps at times too loudly and too persistently. The whole Empire is flooded with my letters and censures against false doctrines. True, my warnings and strictures have not succeeded in restraining the Universities, but they were a consolation to the good." The Nuncio had found a real support in Hofbauer. The Prelate, who was scrupulously conscientious, consulted him in all difficult matters. On one occasion at a large gathering at which Hofbauer also was present, the Nuncio declared openly, though not in the hearing of the Saint, that he had never regretted having taken Father Hofbauer into his counsels. "After we had exerted ourselves in vain," he remarked, "the undoubted sanctity of this man, the convincing power of his arguments, and the charming simplicity of his speech, exercised so wonderful an influence upon persons of high standing, that he overcame all opposition and achieved things that before seemed impossible."

Severoli requested Hofbauer to permit Father Stark, to whom he was much attached, to accompany him on his journey to Rome. The Saint reluctantly gave his consent. The departure of an Austrian priest for Rome was looked upon by the authorities as sufficient reason to suspect his loyalty. Moreover, as has been remarked, Severoli did not enjoy the favor of the Government. Consequently the authorities took special notice of Stark's journey to the Eternal City. Severoli's successor as Nuncio at Vienna was Monsignor Leardi.

Severoli, now a Cardinal, became a new link in the chain binding Hofbauer to Rome. The Saint had kept in touch with his old friends, the German artists, as well as circumstances would permit. The magnificent work that the St. Luke's Guild was doing filled him with joy. A thrill of patriotic pride pervades the letter that he wrote to the Veit brothers, on April 12, 1817. "I am quite elated," he says, "that my countrymen are surpassing other nations in works of art. By this time you are surely all Italians; but I trust that you will keep your German hearts. The Princess Jablonowska complains that she cannot make your acquaintance. You must not be proud, for pride ill-becomes a true artist. But I know that you are not proud — at least you never used to be." From the rest of this letter we learn that the Saint also had business dealings with the two brothers. ". . . May I?. . ." he continues. "Now, here is a sketch which I beg to submit; but the Heavenly Father is not pictured to my liking. Leave the rest, I beg you, as it is. Our dear Lord should, of course, be less severe, and His Blessed Mother should look less like a nun. But you will understand these matters better than I. The picture of my sainted Father (Alphonsus) which you have in Rome, is much better than the one we have here. If you wish, I shall send two more sketches, for there are three of you. Follow your own ideas in painting the others. This seems rather bold and forward on my part, doesn't it? But you know me, and I know you, and for this reason I take the liberty to ask this favor of you. Perhaps I shall yet have the good fortune to see and embrace you."

The third artist referred to in this letter is Eggers, of Mecklenburg. He had but recently entered the Church. Alluding to his conversion, Hofbauer wrote to the Veits: "God be praised! But, my dear children in God, Philip and John, was he not a long time coming to this? I never doubted that he would some day return to the Faith; and therefore I never ceased praying for him to the Father of Lights, especially during the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass."

These young artists, on their part, always remained deeply attached to their father and friend at Vienna. Even John Veit, who was so stiff and unapproachable that Werner used to

say of him, that he would rather let his hand be chopped off than raise it to salute any one but his very closest friends, — even he, in a letter written in the course of this year, expressed a desire to see the grand old man of Vienna once more.

About this time the question of vocation began to trouble Philip, even as some years previously, it had troubled his brother John. He believed that God was calling him to the priesthood. Hofbauer, to whom he turned for advice, contented himself with setting forth in vigorous language the dangers and tremendous responsibilities of this state of life. "Priests," he reminded his young friend, "are the light of the world and the salt of the earth: theirs is an awe-inspiring state of life." All the evils in the Church, he declared, may be traced to unworthy priests; and indeed, is it not priests who are at the present moment making our fatherland so unhappy? Philip finally abandoned the idea of becoming a priest. Both brothers married a few years later (1819 and 1820), following the good example set them by Eggers and Overbeck. Eggers married Elizabeth Seitzen, a smart, sunny young woman of Vienna and friend of the Schlegels, who had accompanied Nina Hartl to Rome. Nina herself became the happy wife of Overbeck. It was a source of great consolation to her when taking this step, that Hofbauer sent his approval and his blessing to her from Vienna; and the first child born to her was named Alphonsus Maria out of regard for Hofbauer.[13]

The Saint's relations with his confrères in Italy, as previously stated and explained, had of necessity suffered since 1808. Hofbauer could not attempt to carry on a direct epistolary correspondence with the General, Father Blasucci, who resided in the Kingdom of Naples. It would have been perilous to do so. The Government was very strict in the matter of the Josephist law prohibiting Religious in Austria from communicating with Superiors outside the realm. Under the constant surveillance of the police, as Hofbauer was, he had naturally to be continually on his guard against doing any-

[13] Nina died in Rome on June 22, 1853. That very morning she had received Holy Communion in church. Overbeck, in one of his letters, states that Hofbauer had predicted to her the approaching end. (Howitt, II. p. 195.)

thing that might make his continued residence in Vienna unsafe. He therefore corresponded only with Blasucci's representative in Rome, to whom he sent his letters either through some friend that happened to be on his way to Rome, or through the Nunciature. But Giattini, it seems, did not overexert himself in trying to restore a close relationship between the Congregation in Italy and the members of the dissolved communities in the North. Giattini had been a bitter opponent of Father de Paola, and this fact seems to have influenced him in his attitude toward Hofbauer, who frequently complained that important questions contained in his letters had remained unanswered.

In the last letter written to Giattini on August 10, 1816, which has been preserved to us, the Saint says: "I gladly make use of every opportunity that presents itself of writing to Your Reverence, though I fear that my letters are a burden to you rather than a source of pleasure. I cannot judge otherwise, in view of the way you act toward me. I am very sorry, but matters cannot be changed." His only purpose in sending even these few lines, he says, is to inquire how Giattini is. Even the Beatification of the Founder of the Congregation was not an occasion of unalloyed joy for the devoted son who had labored to transplant that Congregation beyond the Alps; for he was obliged to find out from a third party the exact date when the Solemnities of the Beatification were to take place in Rome. In September, 1816, Holy Mother Church raised Alphonsus de Liguori to the honors of her altars. This event is numbered among the sweetest and purest joys that brightened the evening of Hofbauer's life. For years he had longed for this day, and from the scant savings that he had been able to put aside, even during the most trying days at Warsaw, he had contributed his mite to help defray the expenses incidental to the Process of the Founder's Beatification. Now that the wished-for day had at last dawned, he left nothing undone to make the Blessed Alphonsus known and loved, to bring his writings to the attention of the faithful, and so to inspire devotion to him and confidence in the power of his intercession. He even went so far as to have pictures of the Beatified Founder made at his own expense in Vienna for the

use of his brethren in Italy. The Superior General, Father Blasucci, died the following year at the age of eighty-eight. The General Chapter held in the fall of the year at Pagani, elected as his successor Father Nicholas Mansione, who was then in his seventy-sixth year.

But whatever information Father Hofbauer had of all these happenings he had gathered from indirect sources; and the Saint, writing, on December 20, 1818, to congratulate the new Superior General, could not refrain from complaining of this neglect. It seems, however, that no official explanation was forthcoming. Such things must have been very bitter experiences for the Saint, who had literally sacrificed his whole life and devoted all his energies to the expansion of the Congregation. His was too great a soul, however, to permit Giattini's conduct to embitter him against the Congregation. At such times humility and self-detachment make it possible for holy souls to draw the proper distinctions and allow for human frailty. Giattini would have been surprised, had he heard how Hofbauer was wont to speak of his brethren in Italy. Pilat's younger brother, John Pilat, who subsequently became a Redemptorist, declares, that the singular love and esteem with which Hofbauer was accustomed to speak of his Italian confrères, more than anything else, finally led him to enter the Congregation.

The Neapolitan Redemptorists, however, should not be too severely condemned for abandoning all hope for the future of the Congregation beyond the Alps. The situation that confronted the Transalpine brethren really seemed beyond all mending. The expectations which the Vicar-General had based upon the surcease of political disturbances and the establishment of a new order of things in Europe, had evidently been blasted. Even after the Congress of Vienna Hofbauer met with reverses in all his undertakings.

As soon as the Bavarian Concordat had been concluded, the Saint took up again one of his former plans by attempting to gain a foothold in the Kingdom of Bavaria. His personal friendship with the Crown Prince Louis gave him some hope of success. He sent a petition to the Holy Father, requesting that influence from Rome be brought to bear upon

the Crown Prince to induce him to give a Convent to the Redemptorists. But, as Consalvi reported to Leardi, the new Nuncio at Vienna, the Holy See declined for three reasons: first, because the Government in pledging itself to restore the Convents in Bavaria had in mind only the convents of teaching Orders, and the Redemptorists were forbidden by their Rule to teach; second, the giving of missions, the work proper to the Redemptorists, was as yet impossible; finally, the Government could not well befriend new Orders rather than the old Orders that had been suppressed, for the latter would take such preference amiss. To all these arguments the Saint might have replied, that the giving of missions was prohibited not only in Bavaria, but everywhere beyond the Alps, and that the Redemptorists hitherto had been able to subsist only under the plea of being a teaching Order. Moreover, Hofbauer, as he always emphatically stated, was asking at present only for a single convent, where his confrères, now scattered to the four winds of heaven, could be reassembled in community and renewed in the spirit of their vocation. At least an inquiry might have been made at Munich, to ascertain whether in the whole kingdom of Bavaria, there was not some small place suitable for such a purpose. That such an inquiry was not made is not a little astonishing, especially in view of the fact that the Crown Prince was a friend of the Saint, and favorably disposed to his plans. It is hard to assign a satisfactory reason for this neglect, other than that in Rome the ecclesiastical authorities seriously doubted whether the Saint's plan to establish the Congregation beyond the Alps was feasible, or even whether the Congregation as such had not attained its full growth and development. The fact is, that there were sufficient grounds at the time to justify such suspicions.

The Saint's efforts to establish a foundation in Podolia similarly resulted in complete failure. The plan for this foundation had originated with the Grocholski and Choloniewski families, whose acquaintance Hofbauer probably made at some time during his sojourn in Warsaw. Count Nicholas Grocholski, a Marshal then, and later Governor of Podolia, had come to Vienna for the Congress. During these weeks he resolved to found on his estates in Janow, near Husiatyn,

in the Diocese of Kamenez-Podolsk, a Convent, Church, and School, under Hofbauer's direction. Frederick Werner, who had known Grocholski and Choloniewski for years, went to Janow, in June, 1816, to prepare for the foundation. He had offered himself for this work, on condition of Hofbauer's commanding him to undertake the journey. The two months he had intended to stay away lengthened to fourteen, so delighted was he with the hospitable reception accorded him at the Choloniewski Castle. The Bishop of Kamenez-Podolsk made him a Canon. It was not until the spring of 1818, after many obstacles, that there seemed to be any well-founded hopes of making a beginning at Janow. In April, Werner wrote to Grocholski: "I have never seen our Reverend Father Hofbauer take hold of a project more enthusiastically and with such youthful ardor and joy as this one." Hofbauer was determined to leave Vienna in the summer or in the fall in order to direct this new foundation in person, and he was preparing to resign his post at St. Ursula's.[14] Father Podgórski received orders to hold himself in readiness for Janow. In addition to him, the Vicar-General had in mind two Polish Fathers in Switzerland for the new foundation, which gave promise of becoming a mission-center for the Catholics of Ukrania. The Metropolitan had already expressed a desire for the services of several German missionaries to minister to the Germans in the southern part of Russia and Crimea.[15] But in consequence of the obstructive attitude of the Russian Govern-

[14] That the Saint actually went to Podolia in the summer of 1818, as has been maintained by Innerkofler (p. 766, note 2, and Floeck, II. p. 324, note 1), is surely an error, as is clear from the report of Countess Cecilia Choloniewska (Innerkofler, p. 757, note 2). During the fall of that same year Count Stanislaus Choloniewski, brother-in-law of Grocholski and distinguished for his virtue and piety, visited the Saint in Vienna while on a journey through Europe. He has set down his impressions of Hofbauer in his diary: "His appearance," he says, "is sad and venerable; his conversation serious. . . . Hofbauer is a remarkably pleasant old gentleman, his manner of speech being popular and his thoughts beautiful and at times deep. I find his company at once edifying and entertaining."

[15] It had been decided to send a number of Fathers into Crimea. *Boecky* (page 5) mentions, evidently on the authority of Father Passerat, that the Government of the Canton Friburg had granted several Fathers a pass to Crimea. But at the request of the inhabitants of Friburg their departure was postponed. In the meantime they obtained a convent in Friburg itself, namely, in Valsainte.

ment, these beautiful plans, like so many others before them, ended in dismal failure.

The defeat of his plans at Janow must have been all the more distressing to the Vicar-General, since at the same time the community in Wallachia met with reverses. During the previous year he had seemed justified in believing that the goal of all his desires had at last been attained. The Prince of Wallachia, who was favorably inclined toward the Fathers, had placed a house at their disposal on the condition that the school was to be gradually transformed into a college. The Schismatical-Greek Bishop of the district was also in favor of the school. During the following year, 1817, the school was opened in a central section of the city. The beginning of an independent foundation had thus been made. The next year, however, brought disaster. Both the Prince and the Greek Bishop unexpectedly departed this life, and their successors were men of far different views. The Schismatical Bishop, with the consent of the Prince, closed the church and the school, almost before the doors of the two edifices had been thrown open to the people. The Fathers were obliged to celebrate Holy Mass very early in the morning, and then remove the altar. Finally, the Prince, out of regard for the Franciscans, forbade any other missionary to enter the city. The Redemptorists were compelled to return to Ciople and were threatened even there.

This sudden turn of events in Wallachia cut Father Hofbauer to the very heart, for he had surrounded this foundation with the brightest of hopes and, considering his straitened circumstances at this period, had made great sacrifices for it. To make matters worse, Father Libotzky, the soul of the little community, was stricken with the pestilence and brought to the very verge of death.

Hofbauer made another attempt to settle in the Balkans. He was urged to send his small community to Philipoppel, where, he was told, there were many Catholics but few priests, and where it should not be so difficult to maintain and support a community. The Propaganda substantially approved this new proposition of the Saint, but advised him to hold out in Wallachia as long as possible. The Nuncio at Vienna did all

in his power, through the mediation of the Government, to bring about the reopening of the chapel and school in Wallachia; but the Austrian Minister assured him that all his efforts were useless, at the same time advising the Fathers to leave Wallachia, which they did immediately after Hofbauer's death.

Father Passerat met with greater success in Switzerland. There, almost ten years to the day after the suppression of St. Benno's, the Saint's hopes of some day being able to found a large convent became a reality. During the years following the expulsion of the brethren from Vallais, in Switzerland (1811), conditions had not changed. The Fathers, numbering from fifteen to twenty, were distributed in various parishes and chaplaincies in Vallais and throughout the Canton of Friburg. Father Passerat frequently shifted his place of abode. His residence in Friburg, where we last left him, was soon exchanged for another not far from Farvagny, where the Bishop was in need of his services. In 1815, he took charge of Posat not far distant. He refused the parish which was offered him in Berne, because his labors in that city would have removed him too far from his confrères. He considered it his principal duty during this trying period to keep alive in his brethren their love for one another and their fidelity to the Congregation. In 1818, he took over the care of the parish of Cerniat. His duties at this new post, the event proved, led directly to the establishment of a new foundation.

Several miles from Cerniat stood the old convent of Valsainte, originally occupied by the Carthusians, and later by the Trappists; for the past six years, however, it had been utterly deserted. The massive buildings, ensconced in the seclusion of the mountains, were left to the mercy of the elements, and the rough mountainous atmosphere had played not a little havoc with them. With a view to preserving them from complete ruin, the Prefect of the District, upon learning that Father Passerat had for a long time been in search of a large convent, suggested that the Redemptorists take over Valsainte and make use of it for humanitarian purposes. Passerat agreed to this on condition that the civil authorities of Friburg grant the Congregation the legal approbation of the State. After protracted negotiations the matter was at

length brought before the Council. The Liberal minority left no stone unturned to prevent the Fathers from settling in this territory. Jestetten, Chur, and Vallais were invaded in quest of information concerning the Redemptorists. The reports from Chur and Vallais were most favorable; from Jestetten, however, Teufel, Bailiff of the Schwartzenberg District and former adversary of the Fathers, sent in the most atrocious accusations against them. When these were read in public session, the Counselors, smiling incredulously, remarked that it was easy to see that these accusations had been concocted in the "devil's" kitchen. (A play on the Bailiff's name, "Teufel," the German equivalent of "Devil".) On January 16, 1818, the proposal to admit the Congregation into the Canton was carried by a vote of sixty-one to forty-five. The Fathers came over from Cerniat, and the solemn entry into their new home took place on May 12. At the time Passerat was confined to his bed in consequence of an accident; but when he learned of the straitened circumstances, of the dire want and sufferings of his confrères in their new home, he could not bear to remain longer in Cerniat. He had himself conveyed on a stretcher to Valsainte, so that he might share the poverty and privations of his subjects. Among his papers there was found later a long letter to St. Joseph, in which the saintly religious with childlike simplicity made known the distress of his community to the Holy Patriarch. Conditions soon improved. The very next day a man sought admission as a lay-brother. He brought with him the sum-total of his earthly possessions — a solitary cow. Both were received. As the days passed, other candidates arrived with similar offerings; and it was not long before the newly-acquired convent was housing about ten Fathers, several clerics, and a number of younger students and lay-brothers. Five of the Fathers had to be left at their posts for some time longer; four of those that had remained in Vallais did not return at all. Misunderstandings and troubles arose with the Bishops, who were unwilling to dispense with the services of the Fathers, as it was frequently difficult to replace them. The matter was even referred to Rome. Passerat, nevertheless, insisted on the return of his confrères to community life. Most of these

members had lived for more than ten years outside the enclosure of the convent, but the exemplary conduct of the saintly Superior sufficed to renew them in the religious spirit. In Vienna, Hofbauer often extolled Passerat for his virtues and his zealous efforts to restore the community life. He was wont to declare, that if ever there were a foundation in Vienna, he would summon the tall Frenchman from Switzerland to be its Rector. "If he cannot make saints of us," he would say, "we shall never become saints!"

Valsainte, beautiful in its seclusion, surrounded by the grandeurs of nature, lifted the heart and the thoughts of Passerat still more forcibly to God. It was an ideal place for the cultivation of the interior life, never more so than when, in the winter months, the snow and the ice shut off the community entirely from the world. The spirit that reigned within its walls is described by one of its members in these words: "We then lived as one is wont to live in a family in which the children are still small."

At this time Hofbauer had with him in Vienna two young men who desired to join the Congregation: Srna, a Bohemian from Moravian Budweis, and Wolff, who later became notorious on account of his errors. He sent both to the Novitiate at Valsainte.

The new foundation, it must be admitted, did not come up to expectations in every respect. The Government of the Canton imposed various unpleasant conditions and restrictions upon the Fathers, and it soon became apparent that the severe mountain-climate did not agree well with some of the younger members. Nevertheless, the prayer which the Saint had incessantly addressed to God during the past thirty years, had at last been granted — the desire and hope that he had cherished since he first crossed the Alps bearing the standard of Alphonsus de Liguori, had finally been realized. He now possessed a quiet, secluded, and — what was especially important — spacious convent for his novices and clerics. A certain chronicler of the Congregation is, therefore, quite right in calling the 12th day of May, 1818, the day on which the members entered Valsainte, a day that will be forever memorable in the history of the Congregation.

CHAPTER VI

THE CATHOLIC MOVEMENT AT THE UNIVERSITY OF VIENNA — FOUNDING OF THE KLINKOWSTROEM EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTE (1818)

THE Hofbauer Circle, by reason of the active part it took in solving the problems of the German Church, came very near assuming an aspect that was at once political and ecclesiastical. The Széchényi Club, if we may be permitted to call this group by the name which the police-reports gave it, in consequence of its concerted action in the interests of religion, may indeed be designated as the first modest attempt at forming a Catholic political party in Austria, in so far as one can speak at all of distinct political parties at that time. For the formation of such a party, it was quite sufficient to band together such men of principle and energy as Schlegel and Pilat. Metropolitan Vienna, accustomed as it was to seeing religion scorned and flouted by the "Illuminati" and the supporters of Josephism, must have stood aghast with amazement on finding such men of rank and distinction stepping forth into the public arena as the champions of religious principle and the rights of the Church. It is not surprising, therefore, to learn that the flippant Metternich ridiculed the men who flocked about Hofbauer and Penckler as "ecclesiastical Chateaubriands." An interchange of letters between Gentz and Pilat during the year 1815, reveals very clearly what the learned circles of Austria generally thought of the ecclesiastical fervor of these men. Gentz was at this time with Metternich in Paris, taking part in the peace negotiations. Pilat had written to consult him upon certain questions of an ecclesiastical nature. Gentz showed the letter to Metternich, who merely pitied the religious eccentricity of Pilat. Gentz, however, frankly voices his apprehension. "When I consider how far you are driving these things," he writes, "and when I see that nothing else seems to interest you, I begin to have

my serious fears for you. It is, I admit, a great blessing to have found a safe anchor to which the soul can cling in the midst of the wild waves and violent tempests of the world. Nevertheless, I fear that this blessing will ultimately prove a fatal misfortune for you; for so tenaciously are you clinging to that which should ennoble, sweeten, and sanctify life, that life itself not only must become a burden to you, but is evidently slipping away from you. Why trouble yourself continually with affairs that concern the Church? Do not misunderstand me. I am far from trying to tear you away from religion — God forbid that I should! But it is none the less true, that the layman, no matter how religious he may be, should leave the Church, as such, in the hands of those whose duty it is to take care of it. . . . You are not in this world to spend all your energies for the Church, at least not for the visible Church. If the Church is to continue to exist, it will surely exist without you; all your efforts to support and preserve it will be vain and unnecessary. The fact is, that no one listens to your utterances, and your indiscretions are forever placing your friends in the painful alternative of drawing the veil over everything you say, write, or do in these matters, or of exposing themselves to ridicule and bitter contempt." [1] Gentz was a freethinker; but what he here wrote is precisely the view-point which the educated Catholic with a leaning toward the tenets of the "Illuminati" took of things at that time. An incredible flouting of the essential visible character of the Church and of the authority of its Head, the Pope, especially among educated classes; crass ignorance of their own duties and of the purpose of their existence, while outwardly and nominally they adhered in a general way to the Christian religion — these things appear to us to have been typical of those who passed for Catholics in the Josephist era. In trying to avoid this precipice Pilat may have exceeded the bounds of prudence in an opposite direction, as is frequently the case with fervent converts; beyond this, it is needless to comment further on the principles which Gentz here enunciates. Pilat was correct when he complained to the Countess Fuchs: "Gentz would gladly cling to religion in certain solemn

[1] *Gentz's Letters to Pilat*, I. p. 195.

moments, but thereafter cast it aside again for weeks and months. He thinks that nothing more than this is required. But this will not do. In this sacred matter more than in any other are those words true: 'He that is not with Me is against Me.' To regard religion as a festive garment which one wears on Sunday and then lays aside for the rest of the week, is the great misfortune into which so many persons fall — even many who are naturally drawn to religion." No better proof than these words is needed to show that the ideal genuine Catholic life, as Hofbauer constantly strove to inculcate it, and as his friend Adam Mueller with admirable clearness and irrefutable logic defended it in the literary field, was beginning to be grasped by a small select group of the laity. That ideal, briefly, was: Religion must not be restricted to the sphere of the individual only, but must pervade and leaven everything and everybody — the individual, the State, society, and mankind in general.

This little Catholic group could not, of course, reckon upon achieving external, tangible results at once. A spiritual regeneration, making the State once again Christian and restoring sympathetic relations between Church and State, was undoubtedly Austria's most urgent need in those days; but that was still a far-distant prospect. The Josephist Bureaucracy was still too firmly intrenched in power. The following report which Severoli sent to Consalvi, the Papal Secretary of State, on October 10, 1815, throws some light on the situation: "I have had a long conversation with Pilat. The doctrines now being endorsed and set forth at the University, which are more vitiated and dangerous than ever before, formed our principal topic. He assured me that he himself, both in his private capacity as an individual citizen, and as a statesman, had written to the Emperor concerning this very vital matter, placing before His Majesty not merely the general facts of the case, but the particulars bearing upon it. Again and again, he tells me, he very frankly warned the Emperor of the necessity of restraining, by means of concerted action with the Holy Father, the arrogance of these teachers, who are now glorying in the triumph of falsehood. He is of the opinion that the only real remedy for the evil we deplore is to be

found in a visit of the Emperor to Rome. . . . Pilat declares that no better heart than His Majesty's beats in any man's breast. If he is deaf to the remonstrances of all those who happen to differ from his counselors, it is because he has been prejudiced by wrong impressions, and because even the utterances of the Bishops resemble a hopeless confusion of tongues. . . . But His Majesty's reverence for the Holy Father is remarkably deep and sincere, and Pilat hopes that the credit for opening the Emperor's eyes to the light will go to His Holiness." But a meeting with the Pope, on the occasion of the Emperor's journey to Italy, in 1815, was frustrated, and for many years thereafter the leading personages surrounding the Austrian monarch's throne continued to be confirmed Josephists.

A Catholic movement, in the political sense, did not become possible in Austria until the year 1848; nevertheless, the beginnings of such a movement in other departments were distinctly noticeable during the last years of Hofbauer's life. To summarize here what remains to be told of our narrative, we need merely direct the reader's attention to four outstanding facts. At the University of Vienna a strong undercurrent of Catholic thought and activity was undeniably at work since the time of the Congress, not only in a portion of the student-body, but even among the Professors. Simultaneously, an unmistakable Catholic tendency was revealed in the literature of Austria. Furthermore, Hofbauer, through the kind offices of his friends, succeeded in establishing for the sons of the nobility an Educational Institute which was conducted according to strictly Catholic principles — a project which had been attempted with such disastrous results under Adam Mueller. Finally, this period witnessed the first step toward the virtual repeal of the Josephist legislation against the conventual life, when Hofbauer obtained legal approbation for the admission of his Congregation into Austria. All these and other things which in the aggregate constituted the Catholic movement of those days, cannot, of course, be attributed exclusively to the credit of our Saint. No detailed account of Catholic intellectual life in the Vienna of those days can pass over in silence the names of those who labored with Hof-

bauer; and no such account can ignore certain conditions that concurred toward the success of his undertakings. But unquestionably it was he that had the greatest part in starting the movement; while all such tendencies toward this movement as leaped into existence without his direct co-operation gravitated toward him as to their natural center. It was he that kept these tendencies and the whole movement alive, fostering, strengthening, and uniting them into one mighty impulse of uniform and concerted action. What Frederick Werner, who became a Catholic without Hofbauer's aid, said of himself — "I became truly Catholic only through Father Hofbauer" — may be said of the entire Catholic movement in those years. Laudable tendencies toward such a movement existed in Austria at the time; but it was Hofbauer that fostered and developed them and gave them the first fruits of success.

What has just been said applies particularly to the movement, alluded to in the foregoing paragraph, among the student-body in Vienna. Similar phenomena occurred in various other Universities of those days, as well as in the University of Vienna. The thrilling events of the War of Independence had shocked many youthful minds from their lethargy, awakening, inspiring, and ennobling them; and the philosophy of the "Illuminati," having reached the meridian of its usurped glory, now began noticeably to decline. The good common sense and sound judgment of the faithful people, from whom the young academic students in large measure were drawn, leaped to the fore and reasserted itself. Dr. John Ringseis, in his memoirs of the student-body at Landshut, of which he had been a member, asserts that as they at first had all united in arguing themselves into unbelief, so now they joined forces to extricate themselves from the maze of error, and groped their way back again to a Christian concept of the universe. As at Landshut those of the students who had kept the faith and those who had returned to it after their wanderings, gathered about Sailer, so also did Professor Bernard Bolzano, who was Instructor in Religion at Prague, become the guiding spirit of the Catholic students there. The Redemptorist, Father Král, who studied at the University of

Vienna at this time, writes in his reminiscences of Father Hofbauer: "The young men who during these years attended the University of Vienna evinced a singular desire to become thoroughly acquainted with the faith and life of Catholics."

In the ranks of the academicians incidents occurred which indicated how complete a change was taking place in religious ideas and sentiments. Quite a sensation was created, for example, when two Instructors highly esteemed in University circles, openly renounced freethinking and not only became believing Catholics, but even took up the study of Theology. These two savants were Dr. Emmanuel Veith, the Jewish Instructor in Medicine, and Dr. John Madlener, the Instructor in Mathematics. Neither of them has anywhere left us an account of the motives for his conversion. Madlener simply states that his conversion occurred in May, 1815.[2] Dr. Veith received the Sacrament of Baptism in 1816. One day in the spring of 1816, the Nuncio Severoli received a great surprise. Six or seven students of the University called at his palace and requested an audience. The spokesman of the party explained how, in endeavoring to find the truth elsewhere than in the Catholic Church, they had all been led astray by dabbling in false systems of philosophy. "I thus had occasion," writes Severoli, in his report to Consalvi, "to admire the wisdom and goodness of God, who attracts souls to Himself in ways that to us mortals seem not at all apt." One of these young men, before taking his departure, asked for a copy of the Life of Alphonsus de Liguori, who had just been declared Blessed. After a few months the Nuncio was able to state that the visit of these students did not represent a mere passing phase of religious enthusiasm. On November 20, 1816, he again wrote to Consalvi: "I know now that these young men not only are themselves persevering in righteousness, but are moreover drawing over their colleagues to the paths of truth and virtue, are openly taking issue with

[2] Tradition has it (see Correspondence of the *Associatio Perseverantiae Sacerdotalis*, XIII, 1892, p. 151), that the text from St. John's Gospel account, xx. 28, and 29, was the occasion of his conversion. As he held that Christ was infinitely truthful, and as Christ did not reject the testimony of the Apostle St. Thomas — "My Lord and my God" — this fact convinced him of the Divinity of Christ.

and refuting the falsehoods of modern philosophers, and are fearlessly combating the spread of pernicious books which are still being widely circulated." The Nuncio remarks that he mentions this incident, because he knows it will fill the heart of the Holy Father with joy. He does not mention any names. Presumably this group was made up of a number of students who, according to a police-report of November, 1815, were wont to meet at the house of the widow Horny, where some of them lived and others took their meals. Leopold Horny, a son of the widow, had finished his philosophy, devoted himself for a time to higher mathematics, and, after escaping from the meshes of the philosophy of the "Illuminati," finally took up the study of Theology.[3] Another police-report praises him for his excellent knowledge of modern literature. From this same report we learn a number of other interesting facts: that Madlener, who also belonged to this group, in addition to being an accomplished mathematician, was passionately devoted to the positive religion of Jesus; that the litterateur Passy and others were members of this group; that neither Werner nor Hofbauer was connected in any way with these students, who could not bear the former and had no particular regard for the latter; that the members in their meetings often spoke of the sermons of both Hofbauer and Werner, at times praising and at times severely criticizing their discourses; that besides the members, others holding different views likewise met at Horny's, giving occasion to warm disputes, which, however, always ended amicably. Thus far the report.

On September 2, 1821, a year and a half after the death of our Saint, Anthony Passy preached the festive sermon on the occasion of the First Holy Mass of Dr. Emmanuel Veith at Maria-Stiegen. Referring to the beginning of his friendship with Dr. Veith, the preacher cried out: "Blessed be that first moment when in our search for books from which we hoped to learn the truth, our paths in life met! Blessed be the moment when we met again in that circle [4] which was misnamed 'learned' and left us joyless and dissatisfied, so that

[3] See his conversation with Frederick Perthes (*Life of Perthes*, II. p. 126.)

[4] Perhaps the group that met at Horny's, as related above.

we both yearned for an entirely different society — a society, in which, as you yourself claimed, there should have to be more silent meditation than talking, and more prayer than brilliant conversation! Blessed be that moment when you said: 'I can no longer consider as my friend any one with whom I cannot pray,' a statement which you later corrected by saying, 'with whom I cannot pray to Mary!' Blessed above all be that moment, the happiest of my life, when we met as in a sanctuary in the heart of him, who, an Austrian himself, drew so many Austrian youths to the feet of the God-man Jesus Christ, who dwelt within him, — that never-to-be-forgotten moment when we met in the heart of the deceased Reverend Vicar-General of the Redemptorists!"

These words admirably illustrate how these academicians who sincerely sought after the truth, finally found in the Director of the Church of St. Ursula's the spiritual guide destined for them by Divine Providence, and under his wise leadership reached to the portals of contentment and interior peace. Another disciple of Hofbauer, Father Král, who was studying Theology at the time, similarly bears witness to Father Hofbauer's ability in calming the troubled waters of men's souls. He and his friends, he tells us, longed to learn from more convincing sources how to feel and think again as Catholics, but he adds that they found complete satisfaction nowhere. "Hofbauer," he declares, "was the only man who satisfied our wants."

In a letter to Cardinal Litta, dated July 29, 1816, the Saint mentions about ten young men who had been followers of the modern philosophy, but who had now returned to more wholesome pastures, and were giving evidence of extraordinary zeal and fervor. Had they persevered in their errors, he says, they would have caused untold harm to themselves and to others; but now they do not blush to serve at the altar, they receive the Sacraments most devoutly, and they are bringing others also over to their own views. Among the first to enter into closer relations with the Saint were Dr. Madlener and his friend, the jurist Francis Springer, of Strass, in Lower Austria. The latter had never fallen into any of the prevailing errors of the day, but on his arrival in Vienna had

occasioned great grief to his pious family by abandoning the idea of studying Theology. He was held in the highest esteem both by his colleagues and by his professors. Because of his remarkable ability in argumentation he was actually feared in debate. Leopold Horny likewise became a disciple of Hofbauer's. These, with a few others, formed about Hofbauer the nucleus of a company of academicians which, though small in 1816, rapidly increased in number in the course of the next two years. One of them remarked that he could not understand why so many students and young men gathered about Father Hofbauer. It reminded him, he said, of the time of Christ, when each disciple brought another to the Messiah; for so did these students: as soon as one had learned to know Father Hofbauer, he could not rest until he had brought some friend or associate of his to the Saint. Several were directed to Hofbauer by Werner. It is quite possible that many of them experienced what Anthony Guenther experienced, when as a student of law he came from Prague to Vienna. Guenther, who later gained renown as a philosopher, relates in his autobiography, that while still in Prague, he sought advice regarding his vocation from his Professor, Bernard Bolzano. His parents had set their hearts on his becoming a priest, but he could not make up his mind to do so, as he could not convince himself of the necessity of divine revelation. Bolzano finally confirmed him in his resolution to continue his study of law, remarking sadly that convictions cannot be changed. This veiled prediction of the Professor, Guenther found on his arrival in Vienna, was not to be fulfilled. "My friend Leopold Horny introduced me to Hofbauer," he writes; "and as soon as I looked upon this man of God, the thought flashed into my mind, 'this and no other is the man to whom you should reveal the history of your past life.' And I was not mistaken. As Horny remarked to me, Werner had said that he knew of only three truly great men then living: Napoleon, Goethe, and Hofbauer. I soon understood what Werner meant by Hofbauer's greatness. He was great in many things, but his real greatness showed itself as a Confessor for those prodigal sons of the Faith whom shame caused to hesitate and stammer when telling their sins in the Sacrament of Penance. In such

cases he would simply say: 'Go on, I know what you wish to say.' I shall never forget the words he spoke to me in his exhortation before imparting the absolution: 'Always be mindful of the words of Our Lord: "There shall be joy in heaven upon one sinner that doth penance more than upon ninety-nine just who need not penance." (Luke xv. 7.) Rejoice with those that are in heaven, and you will in patience bring forth worthy fruits of penance. But remember that the greatest patience you will be called upon to practise will be patience with yourself; for, as Our Lord said, "the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh (is) weak."' (Matth. xxvi. 41.) — From that time forth until his death Hofbauer remained my adviser in all matters pertaining to my spiritual life."[5] Many others probably had experiences similar to Guenther's. It was a singular fact, that one's initial meeting with the Saint awakened the desire to open one's conscience to him, and whosoever yielded to this interior prompting and went to confession to him once, invariably clung to him thereafter.[6]

In this way it gradually came to pass that fifty young men placed themselves under Hofbauer's special direction. Dr. Veith, who, since 1818, was also numbered among the Saint's disciples, himself admitted that he had acquired true fervor in his new-found faith only from him. The majority of these young men were University students, for the most part from the Law Schools. Their individual relations with Hofbauer naturally differed widely. Some of them came to him only in the confessional. There were, however, twenty or thirty who were linked to him in a more intimate friendship, and many of these visited him every day. Closest to him were Madlener, Dr. Veith, Springer, and Don Pajalich, a young priest from Dalmatia, who was preparing for the Doctorate in Theology. Of these, again, Madlener, a childlike, devout, and ingenuous character, was his favorite disciple. Hofbauer's home in Seiler Place was always open to his young friends, whether he happened to be at home or not. As there were besides those of this youthful group many other persons who came to visit him, he willingly sacrificed the late, quiet hours of the evening to those who sought him out. The silence and solitude

[5] Knoodt, I. p. 113. [6] H. Bahr, *Rudigier*, p. 17.

of his room were gone. On his day of monthly recollection, as also during his annual Retreat, nothing remained for him but to betake himself to the church and spend a few restful hours there. At times he was even obliged to prepare his sermons in this noisy company. He would then throw a cloth over his head, in order to create a kind of solitude in which to gather his thoughts. On one occasion Werner complained bitterly to him, that he could no longer find him alone. "Those rascals are always here," he remarked. "Yes," replied the Saint, "and those rascals are dearer to me than you."

Hofbauer could invariably be found at home in the evening. This fact is mainly responsible for the formation of those famous evening socials, which imparted a singularly human touch and character to the last three or four years of our Saint's life. Oftentimes, when he came home in the evening, fatigued and worn out, he found his room already crowded with visitors. "You are a fine crowd," he was wont to say to them, as he hung his mantle on a nail; and as he turned about, they would one by one, approach to kiss his hand and receive his blessing. They had seen Sabelli and Stark do this as marks of reverence toward their Superior, and imitated them. Each one received some slight refreshment, which no one was easily permitted to decline, — the rich were never allowed to refuse, for he wished them to practise humility by sharing the repast of the poor. In that ample cupboard of his there was always something to distribute among them — fruit, cakes, cold meats, or the like. A number of poor students dined regularly with him, and any one that accidentally dropped in for a visit when they were at table, had to share the meal. Whenever he was at home, he himself served at table, while Sabelli and Stark and the guests enjoyed the meal in peace. As his portion he took the remnants, which he ate standing.

The principal feature of Hofbauer's method as a director of youth was well expressed by one of his disciples: "As Divine Providence governs all things sweetly, so did Hofbauer endeavor to attract others by mildness." He was averse to nothing so much as to that method which tries to urge young people by too much talk. He possessed in an unusually high degree that rare and precious gift of accomplishing wonders

with a few well-chosen words. Werner once met a crowd of students just as they were leaving the home of the Saint, and perceiving that their countenances beamed with joy and enthusiasm, he curiously inquired what beautiful things Hofbauer had just been telling them. "Oh, nothing in particular," was the reply; "he said merely, 'Be good!'" Especially did he not set much store upon the direct refutation of the objections raised against Faith; nor did he believe much in the value of bandying words in philosophical subtleties, or in disputing about matters of Faith. He censured the Germans for going too far afield in seeking the truth which God had brought so close to man. It cannot be denied that Catholic Apologetics at the time was cast over with a gossamer of rationalism. Thus, when the zealous Father Frint, a priest at the Castle of Vienna, brought out his "Compendium of Religion," objections were raised against the work on the score that it made the young more acquainted with unbelief than with the Faith. The book, which was excessively diffuse, cost the poor students of philosophy the small fortune of thirty-six florins. The apologetic methods followed by Professor Bolzano in Prague were regarded as even more dangerous. Instead of lifting up the young men under his tutelage from the depths of rationalism to the healthy atmosphere of a strong and lively faith, they did just the reverse by leading them into the very subtleties of rationalistic doctrine. While Sailer was condemned for emphasizing the Catholic doctrine too little, Bolzano exposed himself to censure by following an equally unfortunate method in his lectures and exhortations. From a laudable desire to win the youth back again to religion, he made the mistake of modifying or minimizing the supernatural character of Christianity too much. Personally, however, Bolzano was not merely a Mathematician of rare ability and a thoroughly orthodox Philosopher, but a most worthy and exemplary priest as well, and there can be no doubt that he accomplished much good among the students. Many a one owed to Bolzano his salvation from the snares and pitfalls of vice, which his keen analysis and judgment knew so well how to dissect and stigmatize. In his Sunday exhortations he inveighed without mercy against the dissoluteness and debauchery prevalent

among the students at the time, without being in the least concerned about the hatred which his scathing denunciations might enkindle. All this must be borne in mind, when we attempt to pass judgment on Bolzano and his apologetic methods.[7]

It is a singular fact of this historical era in Germany and Austria, that the men who, like Wessenberg, Boos, and Lindl, drifted entirely into error, or who, like Bolzano, went to extremes in orthodoxy, were all remarkably clever and well-meaning men. Even Sailer has been set down by Alban Stolz as a transitionist. This fact alone suffices to show the vital importance of the position which Hofbauer held and what he came to signify in an age, when even the finest intellects within the German Church were groping about for the truth, and even the Church itself, in its external organization, had fallen a victim to the universal disorder and confusion. Hofbauer stood above his time and its weaknesses. He was in no sense a transitionist; he was pre-eminently a Catholic genius, and his genius manifested itself in nothing else so strikingly as in the gentle wisdom with which he guided so many students out of the maze of doubt or even out of the night of unbelief back to the paths of safety and the full noontide splendor of Catholic faith.

Hofbauer, however, was neither narrow nor self-opinionated; hence, in following his own methods in directing these youthful minds, he did not underestimate the value of theoretical study as a means of confirming one's convictions in matters of Faith. It was owing primarily to Hofbauer's urging that that endless quibbler, Anthony Guenther, was prevailed upon, for his own further enlightenment, to undertake the study of Theology. Nor did the Saint evade controversy when occasion demanded, as is evident from this pregnant saying of his quoted by Emmanuel Veith: "He that endeavors to make people think rationally, will invariably make enemies of them; and yet they all wish to be considered intelligent beings." As a rule, however, he was governed in his labors for others by the principle, that "The example of a life of practical, unwavering faith, expressing itself in deeds of Christian charity, does

[7] Knoodt, I. p. 76.

far more good than the most learned arguments." Times without number his own experience had convinced him of the truth of this. What effect his mere association with young men wrought upon their lives may be gleaned from the testimony of Frederick von Held. This eminent jurist tells us, that in consequence of his previous unprincipled education, he could not, even for a long period after joining the circle of Hofbauer's disciples, regard the vocation to the priesthood with anything but deep aversion; Hofbauer, perhaps divining his sentiments, not only never broached the subject of vocation to him, but on several occasions had positively forbidden others to hint at this subject in Held's presence. Gradually, however, a change was wrought in Held's attitude, for, in the course of the years, he assures us, " the example of this simple and modest priest, my constant association with him, the peace and holiness which radiated from his countenance, finally overcame my aversion entirely." Held eventually became not only a priest but a religious as well, and is remembered as one of the principal supports of the Transalpine Congregation of the Redemptorists.

Whenever Hofbauer sought to influence his disciples by arguments, he would draw those arguments chiefly from the history of the Church. The continued existence of the Church throughout the ages, its government, and its whole history must ever form the clearest and most potent of all the proofs in favor of its divine origin. To acquaint his disciples with the history of the Church, with the lives of the Saints, and with the achievements of the great champions of the Faith, was, in his opinion, of far greater importance than to make them masters in philosophical discussion. Nearly every evening, after his disciples had gathered at his home, there were public readings, and these readings were usually from the pages of Church History. Bérault-Bercastel, or the " History of the Religion of Jesus Christ," by Count Stolberg, which had just been published, were the books from which these readings were made.

To sum up this matter in a few words, Hofbauer's endeavors were directed less against the philosophical objections urged against the Faith by the intellect, than against those most

stubborn roots of doubt and infidelity — pride and sensuality. His chief aim was to instil humility and purity into the hearts of the young. How often was he not heard to say: "Be humble! otherwise the mysteries of Faith will appear to you to be mere fables." In like manner he set his face resolutely against that vain and complaisant spirit of vanity which prompts one to put one's self forward, and which is particularly in evidence whenever there is a large gathering of young persons from all classes of society. Similarly, human respect in all its subtle manifestations, found in him an uncompromising antagonist. Moreover, he insisted that his disciples make public profession of the religious convictions which they had recovered. The casual visitor to St. Ursula's Church might on any day of the year witness a spectacle never before seen there or anywhere else in the city: University students from the best families, who received the Sacraments every week or oftener, approaching to partake of the Bread of Angels; others serving at the altar with all the marks of deep devotion and most lively faith, and — at least on the more solemn feasts, when Father Hofbauer carried the Blessed Sacrament in procession through the church — accompanying their Eucharistic Saviour with lighted tapers or torches.

Hofbauer knew well, as Dr. Madlener relates, how to mortify the inordinate self-love of the young men. One day Hofbauer and Madlener escorted a party of friends to Mariazell. After securing rooms for their guests at the inn, Madlener tried to find a bed for himself. There was not another to be had. Hofbauer calmly said to him, "Do as I do," and without another word stretched himself on the floor in a corner of the room. There was nothing for the young doctor to do but to imitate him. Madlener often accompanied the Saint on his visits to Count Széchényi's. On one occasion Hofbauer wished to take a second companion with him, but the carriage that came to fetch him had room only for two. After Hofbauer and one companion had stepped in, Madlener was about to proceed on foot. But the Saint called out to him: "Come here, you little fly! there will be room enough for you!" Madlener hesitated, for he failed to see how three could travel comfortably in the carriage. "Come in, then, as an act of

obedience," the Saint called out again, and drawing him into the carriage, he took the astonished youth on his knees, and in this manner they drove off through the main street to Széchényi's palace. On another occasion Madlener, speaking figuratively, remarked that he had seen beautiful clouds in Széchényi's garden. For several days thereafter, Hofbauer kept on asking: "Madlener, what about those beautiful clouds in Széchényi's garden?" Evidently, the foundation of that humility and simplicity of heart for which Madlener as a religious was later so conspicuous, was laid in this school.

In regard to the cultivation of chastity, witnesses assure us that a mere glance at the Saint sufficed to fill one with chaste sentiments and love for holy purity. He constantly reminded his followers that prayer and mortification are the chief weapons to be used in the struggle for the palm of holy purity. His disciples had frequently to pass through the streets at night; and in order to protect themselves against the dangers that lurk in a large city at such hours, they formed the habit of carrying a small rosary of one decade only, which they could recite unobserved. Moreover, many of them, following his example and counsel, would deprive themselves of their breakfast, at least during Advent, so that they might give it to the poor. In the matter of fasting, however, he exercised the greatest prudence, and took into consideration the physical strength of his disciples. His solicitude for these students extended to their physical as well as to their spiritual well-being. Dr. Veith, himself an excellent physician, remarked that Hofbauer instinctively perceived also the bodily needs of others, and with all the certainty of a medical decision, prescribed remedies and taught others how to take care of their health. One stormy night, Dr. Veith relates, the Saint would not permit him to return to his home, as he lived in a distant suburb, but made him remain with him for the night. Dr. Veith, like many of the other young students, oftentimes arrived in the early afternoon, without having even tasted any food that day. On his arrival Hofbauer immediately made inquiries, and on learning that the doctor had not broken his fast, would at once send some one to the neighboring inn "Zur Katz," to get him a bowl of good soup. A newly-or-

dained priest once dined with him on the day of his Ordination. Perceiving that the young man was very delicate, the Saint detained him and obliged him to take a half-hour's siesta after dinner. "In your condition," Hofbauer remarked, "a little sleep will do you good." He himself prepared the bed for the young priest, and when the half-hour had expired, woke him and took him out for a walk in the city. This careful attention to even the most ordinary and trifling details, such as is usually found only in a mother's heart, explains to a great extent why the young felt themselves so irresistibly drawn to the Saint. Sometimes he would go to welcome his visitors with open arms and clasp them affectionately to his heart. The younger Pilat, a student of Polytechnics, who relates this, adds, that this embrace always left in his heart a feeling of peace and the warmth of divine love.

His disciples were, for the most part, deserving of the love of so good a master. There were, of course, a few exceptions. Some wore the mask of discipleship, and represented themselves as hungering and thirsting after justice, merely to share in the Saint's abundant alms. Usually it was not long before he saw through their hypocrisy, but out of compassion for them he did not dismiss them. Joseph Wolff, who was as fickle as he was gifted, and who was constantly wavering between the Church and Protestantism, was a source of great worry to the Saint. So long as he was in Hofbauer's company, he was fully in accord with him.[8] Thomas Lederer, a student of medicine and a blustering advocate of unbelief, acted in similar fashion. He had hardly been introduced to Hofbauer, when he veered entirely about. He now wished to become a missionary, and of course was nothing loath to predict that as such he would render more service to the Church than a hundred others. To the sorrow of the Saint, however, he soon reverted to his former sentiments. . . . But, as has already been remarked, these were only the exceptions. On the whole, Hofbauer had every reason to be proud of the young men he had

[8] For particulars about Wolff, see Haringer, *Life of Hofbauer,* p. 288. note 2. In the reports of the Nunciature of Leardi from 1818 and 1819, there is frequent reference to Wolff, about whom the Roman Propaganda appears to have interested itself considerably.

gathered around him. Indeed, he once wrote to Sophia Schlosser, that there were some among them who would have been an ornament to the Church in the first centuries of Christianity. "I can say with all truth," he writes, "that some are veritable apostles; for they seek out those that are in error and endeavor to lead them back to the path of truth and righteousness."

A few passages from the letters of Francis Kosmaczek, a medical student, who, in 1818, came from Bohemia to Vienna and there made the acquaintance of Hofbauer through Madlener, will serve to show the spirit that animated this select group of young men. In Vienna Kosmaczek found a new world revealed to his eyes. On November 5, he wrote to his father: "I have found here good, loyal, and disinterested people, friends who are molding my character, cheering me on, and making me truly happy by their example and companionship. What I hoped to find here, I have actually found — friends who are an ornament to human nature, and of whose friendship I am as yet wholly unworthy. If you can form a mental image of an ideal human being, you need only come here to discover in reality what your imagination pictures to you so beautifully. Unaffected simplicity, a salutary fear of God, genuine humility, and unusual wisdom are the outstanding virtues of these noble people with whom Divine Providence has cast my lot. I thank God that I came to Vienna; and I beg Him to keep me ever grateful to Him for leading me here; for that which I had always desired but never dared to hope for as attainable, Providence has bestowed upon me in so singular a manner that I cannot but recognize its possession as a remarkable evidence of the divine goodness. Until I know these good people more intimately, I shall picture them to you as truly and as clearly as I can, so that you also, please God, may derive pleasure and profit and edification from them." The first few weeks wrought a wonderful change in the soul of this medical student. Scarcely one month later, he frankly acknowledged to his father: "In early youth I had little religion, and that little I lost in the course of my studies. I entered upon devious ways, falling from one precipice to another, blundering into the labyrinth of doubt, whence in my

ignorance I knew not how to find my way out. I willingly make an open confession of having, through the reading of corrupt literature, books professedly learned but none the less infidel, through having consorted with witty and so-called educated men of our enlightened times, and above all through a blind intellectual pride, made shipwreck of the faith of my soul, the peace of my heart, and the purity of my will. . . . And now, I quite as readily confess that by cultivating the inspiring companionship of saintly men and by the reading of pious and elevating books, I have been converted from the error of my ways. With eyes streaming tears and with bleeding heart I have gone through the fight, and I hope that God will now lead me on to complete victory over myself. In my soul I have crushed the head of unbelief, which like an expiring monster is now racking my heart with anguish." He now endured severe struggles regarding his vocation. "Surrounded by the stillness of the night," his thoughts turned to the choice of a state of life. He felt himself drawn strongly to the priesthood, but sensual desires and pride made the victory difficult for grace. Oftentimes he felt like evading the issue; "but no one," he says, "can flee from God." With the appreciation of the Catholic Church that had been awakened within his soul, the Sacred Priesthood suddenly appeared supremely desirable. The following sentiments expressed in a letter to his father, were probably only the echoes of those evenings spent at Hofbauer's in reading and discussing questions of Church History: "The Religion of Jesus Christ has now endured in all its splendor for 1818 years. Neither the storms of time nor the malice of men has been able to destroy it; nor shall our unbelieving, proud age be able to move it from its firm foundations. It stands there in glory, the virgin crowned with the stars, the ever-changing moon beneath her feet, clothed with the sun. . . . I feel quite incompetent to tell you anything about the surpassing beauty and the divinity of our holy religion, the religion of Jesus Christ." He leaves this last task to Count Stolberg, from whose works he here quotes a number of passages for his father. A most remarkable enthusiasm for the Faith, sincere gratitude for the happiness of soul he had recovered, and truly apostolic zeal shine forth in

the letters of this new convert. Kosmaczek, like Held, became one of the ornaments of the Congregation.

These individual cases of converts suddenly aware that their new-found spiritual life had blossomed forth into a vocation to the Priesthood, were not the only cases of the kind. There were others. Francis Springer, who under the stress of pecuniary difficulties had fought his way through the whole course of Jurisprudence, now took up the study of Theology. In fact, so many of Hofbauer's disciples successively abandoned the professional studies they had chosen and went over to that of theology, that parents grew alarmed as soon as their sons began to visit Hofbauer regularly. Hofbauer, as has been remarked, did not intend this. It so happened of itself, and was almost inevitable in the ordinary course of events at that time. Vocations to the priesthood and to the religious state are always plentiful; but at times there is no one to awaken them and foster them, and so they are lost. This was especially the case during the period when the "Illuminati" held sway. In Austria the restraint placed upon the Church by Josephism supplied what was yet lacking to make aspiring youth disgusted with the priesthood and to render the priestly state contemptible. The scarcity of vocations to the priesthood had been the cause of much anxiety even to the Austrian Bureaucracy; but the means employed by the Government to remedy the evil only made matters worse. How simply did not Hofbauer remedy the evil! He removed the debris which iniquity had cast up about the Church, and revealed to the eyes of astonished youth the Church without spot or wrinkle as Christ had established it in all its resplendent glory! And the result of this revelation — the happy, spontaneous awakening of vocations to the priesthood and to the religious life among the Catholic youth at the Universities — was the most decisive victory that Hofbauer gained over Josephism and Josephism's chief protagonists, the "Illuminati."

If only he had been suffered to put this magnificent work of fostering vocations upon a firm footing! In his letter of May, 1818, to Sophia Schlosser, from which we quoted above, he complains bitterly of the difficulties he has to encounter. If he were given a free hand, he says, he would find it a com-

paratively easy matter to effect an astounding change in the student-body. "The young people are disgusted with what they are taught at the University," he writes; "and yet, one is obliged to do in secret whatever good one can do, as if we were living in a heathen land."

As will become evident farther on in this narrative, it was precisely this influence which he exercised in academic circles that soon enkindled against him an opposition so bitter as to jeopardize all his future activities in Vienna.

This apostolate among the young men, upon which Hofbauer had imperceptibly entered, may have been the occasion that inspired him to revert to the project once before attempted by Mueller, of establishing a Catholic Educational Institute for boys of the higher classes of society. Only by this means could the work he had begun among the young men be placed upon a broader basis and be continued after his death. This time the undertaking met with immediate success. The direction of the Institute devolved, not now upon Adam Mueller, but upon Frederick von Klinkowstroem. For several years Klinkowstroem had lived in retirement and in modest circumstances. Far superior as an educator to his learned friend Adam Mueller, he ensured the success of this new project by happily avoiding the mistakes that Mueller had made. The Archduke Maximilian d'Este sponsored the project and brought it for approval before the Emperor. The devout Prince had made a vow to God, that in the event of the success of his efforts, he would for the rest of his life abstain from taking sugar in his coffee. This vow he faithfully kept.

In October, 1818, the Institute was opened in a house on the "Wieden." Hofbauer, however, was not satisfied with the building and its limited surroundings. He therefore prevailed upon Klinkowstroem to purchase the spacious "Scheiblauer House." One day toward the end of May, 1819, Klinkowstroem accompanied Hofbauer on a walk to the Alser suburbs. Hofbauer suddenly halted in front of the "Scheiblauer House" and, interrupting the conversation, said to his friend: "Look at that house! It is quite suitable for an educational institution. It can easily accommodate fifty boys!" And raising his hand, he blessed the house as he said: "Buy

that house! " And when Klinkowstroem remonstrated: " But you know my circumstances very well," the Saint replied, " Yes; but you will buy the house." And he really did. Through the unexpected aid of a disinterested stranger, a Protestant Baron, Klinkowstroem succeeded in procuring the house on easy terms. From the very beginning God's blessing rested in a visible manner on the undertaking. With the opening of the following scholastic year the Institute was in its new home. A former pupil has left us an interesting description of the place. Among other things he stresses the fact that " the Institution was complete in every respect, satisfying the strictest demands that could be made upon an institution intended to supply home-training, not only as to general educational facilities, but also as to sanitary housing and reasonable recreation. But what particularly characterized Frederick von Klinkowstroem's Institute and distinguished it from all other private schools, and also from most public institutions at the time, was the object it sought to attain above every other — to place, not merely the instruction of the intellect, but also the moral training of the heart, on a strictly Catholic basis. Toward this end all its directive and disciplinary measures were primarily aimed, and in this way it sought to instil into the minds and hearts of the young such religious ideals as would lay the solid foundations of a truly manly character, and serve them at once as a shield against the dangers and allurements of the world and an unfailing guide in working out their eternal salvation. The teaching, discipline, and management of the house were conducted along these lines and permeated with this spirit. At the same time proper care was employed lest by subjecting the students to any form of ascetical compulsion, boys of a naturally mirth-loving disposition be converted into religious hypocrites. For this reason, too, the religious exercises were confined to morning and evening prayer, grace before and after meals, daily attendance at Holy Mass, and the fulfilment of the Easter precept. The frequent reception of the Holy Sacraments was left for the most part to the devotion of the young people themselves. On the other hand, that cheerfulness which is characteristic of youth and harmless in itself was fostered in every way. Von Klinkow-

stroem and the Professors of the Institute often directed the various games which the students played in common, and not infrequently they themselves participated in them. Dramatic entertainments, too, were staged from time to time. Thus there was no lack of amusement and healthful exercise. The spirit of concord and the tone of refinement which were everywhere in evidence at the Institute, as well as the good results which were there achieved, were due in the main to the eminent educator to whose leadership the welfare of the Institute was entrusted, and who gave himself to this difficult task with unreserved, self-sacrificing devotedness. His own thorough education, his knowledge of the world and of men, the experience he had gathered in the course of his long and checkered career, rendered von Klinkowstroem eminently qualified to direct the intellectual and moral training of these young people. He fully understood how to temper severity with kindness, and, as occasion demanded, to apply both with tact and justice. His very appearance and his whole personality were such as to inspire respect and love. He was tall of stature; his countenance, usually wearing an earnest expression, could as easily transform itself into an expression of the most winning kindliness; his keen, gray eyes, whose penetrating gaze one under reproof could hardly endure, at other times beamed benevolence and invited confidence; in a word, his whole being bore the unmistakable impress of a soul as strong as it was humble, — a soul imbued with the spirit of a true Christian, endowed with a resolute will, and blessed with an abiding peace. His relations with the students were those of a kind, loving, and interested father." [9]

Even though this school had a comparatively short-lived career, the mere fact that a strictly Catholic educational institution had been called into being in the Vienna of those days, could be looked upon as a signal victory for religion. Hofbauer, of course, was obliged to remain in the background; and therefore, secular priests, and not the Fathers of his own Congregation, were appointed to fill positions at the Institute as Instructors in Religion and as Professors.

This Institute was one of the sweetest joys of our Saint's

[9] Baron von Brenner Felsach (*Klinkowstroem*, p. 350).

declining years. He saw its beginning and its early development. He was a frequent visitor there. For a number of years now, he had been the spiritual director of the Klinkowstroem family. The third son, born toward the close of the Congress of Vienna, received at baptism the name of Clement. The Saint himself administered the sacrament, and insisted that all those present, irrespective of creed, impose their hands on the child. The next son born of the Klinkowstroems was given the name of Alphonsus at the sacred font. Madame Klinkowstroem, an ideal housewife, directed the affairs of the entire household. Dr. Veith, who frequently visited there, remarked that it was difficult to decide which of the two deserved the palm of excellence — Louisa, or her sister Madame Pilat; "for," he says, "more noble, pious, refined, and intellectual German women could hardly have been found anywhere. It was most refreshing to behold how prudently they managed affairs in the household, how wisely they educated the children, and how cheerfully and whole-heartedly they bestowed their services wherever and whenever their services seemed to be required."[10] This is high praise indeed; yet it does not appear to be overdrawn. Hofbauer himself was wont to say of Louisa, whenever reference was made to this happy, cheerful, lovely woman: "Hers is a singularly beautiful soul; this woman could remove mountains with her faith."

During the sixteen years of its existence, there were, in all, two hundred and ten pupils who attended the Institute. Klinkowstroem never accepted more than fifty, because he claimed that a larger number could not be taken care of properly or trained successfully. That the majority of these pupils happened to be sons of the aristocracy, was no part of Klinkowstroem's plan. After the Emperor had spoken in praise of the Institute on one occasion, it leaped into favor with the nobility. Most of the pupils, in later life, entered the diplomatic or military service. The great majority of them, too, remained true to the ideals they had formed and the principles they had imbibed at the Scheiblauer House. The Liberalist, Count Anthony Auersperg, who later gained renown as a poet under the name

[10] Brunner, *Hofbauer*, p. 273.

of Anastasius Gruen, was one of the few exceptions. The defection of such former students as these, however, was amply compensated for by the subsequent careers of many others, who, like Baron von Stillfried, rose up manfully in an age arrayed against faith and truth, and fearlessly championed the Catholic cause.

CHAPTER VII

PASTORAL SCENES FROM THE SAINT'S MINISTRY IN VIENNA

LET us here interrupt for a moment the chronological order of our narrative, which we have now brought down to the year 1818. What has been told in the preceding chapters deals more or less with single episodes from the life of our Saint. In his proper sphere of action, in his labors for the salvation and direction of souls, we have not as yet sufficiently learned to know the apostle of Vienna.

Professor Kuehnel, who taught Pastoral Theology at the time in Vienna, was one day lecturing on the rules of prudence to be observed when attending the dying. In concluding his lecture, he remarked that he knew a certain priest in Vienna who set all these rules aside, and who nevertheless met with astounding success. He meant Hofbauer. What the learned professor said of Hofbauer's ministrations to the dying, may be applied with equal truth to all his priestly labors. They bear throughout the impress of the unique, of the unusual; hence, it is scarcely necessary to remark, that in the account of Hofbauer's labors in the sacred ministry, there are many things which cannot be set up as models for imitation. The young priest who would venture to imitate Hofbauer, Saint though he was, in everything, would soon discover his mistake, as did the young Don Pajalich, who made the attempt. Pajalich, in his reminiscences of Hofbauer, relates how his efforts to copy the example of his revered master, ended, one after another, in disaster. He began to walk through the streets with uncovered head, as Hofbauer was wont to do, but he was soon obliged to give up this practice; an exhortation to the people at Holy Mass proved an utter failure; and when he finally tried to convert a Lutheran, he found himself unceremoniously outside the door. Hofbauer's manner and methods were all his own and quite inimitable. This is what

Werner meant, when he said of him: "There is not another like him: there is but one Hofbauer; the Holy Ghost speaks through the mouth of this man!" In describing his life in this chapter, it will be best, then, to recount separately and without much comment, just as they have been handed down to us by those who witnessed them, his labors, methods, and manner of acting, in the pulpit, in the confessional, at the altar, at the bedside of the sick and dying, in the private homes of families he visited, in the streets even, his relations with various classes of society, and finally his labors as spiritual director of the nuns and as the Superior of his confrères. These descriptions will reconstruct before our eyes many interesting scenes from his life, and these scenes will speak for themselves, and will require no further comment or explanation.

1. *Hofbauer as Preacher.* — Not a single sermon of his has been preserved to us in its entirety. In fact, he never wrote his sermons; he seldom made even a written sketch of his discourses. Contemporary reports, however, give us a clear idea of his manner of preaching, which they describe as altogether unique. His sermons, at least those he preached in Vienna, were neither set, formal discourses, nor fully developed homilies; rather they partook of the nature of both, and, because they could not be classified under either head, would probably find little favor in the eye of a critical homilist. His usual methods were the following: He would read the Gospel, and would interrupt the reading to interpolate or add some explanatory remarks, as he frequently did during the early days of his sacred ministry; or, he would take up one text of the Gospel after another, dwelling longer upon some, passing over others more quickly; or again, he would build up a catechetical instruction or a moral sermon upon a single text, contrast with this teaching the views and customs prevailing among men at the time, and then with fervent words exhort his hearers to a reformation of life. In this way he would at times touch upon several subjects in one and the same sermon. Thus, on September 10, 1815, the Feast of the Holy Name of Mary, he spoke on the desecration of the Sunday, the infallibility of the Church, the veneration of the Blessed Mother of

God, and the Religious Life. Formerly he had been permitted to preach every day; now he was obliged to compress all he wished to say to the people into one Sunday sermon.[1]

Nor were the external form and the diction of his sermons such as to conceal their flaws of technique. Hofbauer did not possess the gifts of an orator. The manner in which he was obliged to complete his ecclesiastical studies and the long periods he spent abroad, may explain why the style and idiom of his German were not faultless. Apparently he paid little attention to language. He clothed his ideas in the simplest expressions. He possessed no copious vocabulary, and hence made use of the same stereotyped expressions over and over again. The first impression that his sermons made on educated persons was far from favorable.

And yet, for many years together, Hofbauer was the most successful preacher in the pulpits of Vienna. The written text of his sermons, even if they had been preserved to us, would never reveal the secret of their singular appeal. Two facts, that had little to do with their style or delivery, explain their magnetism: first, they were distinctly unlike the sermons generally preached in Vienna at the time; and second, the Saint's simplest utterances in the pulpit were permeated with a faith that was as deep as it was childlike.

Since the days of the Emperor Joseph II, the strictly Catholic sermon had gradually disappeared from the pulpits of Austria. During the period when the "Illuminati" were in power, a relentless warfare was waged against preachers of the orthodox Catholic doctrine, who found that their bitterest opponents were the so-called "Illuminated" members of the clergy. The result soon became evident. It was now a rare thing indeed to hear specifically Catholic doctrine preached from the pulpit. Instead there was merely that superficial talk of a universal Christianity, those empty platitudes about universal charity, and that cheap moralizing which the "Illuminati" brought into the pulpit. Illustrative of the tendencies

[1] Compare this with the strict method of his homiletic sermons during his stay in Warsaw (see above p. 158). That he did not entirely abandon this method after he came to Vienna, we learn from a witness who tells us that the Saint once based his Lenten Sermons on the first texts of the Book of Genesis.

of the times is this remark of Král, already spoken of as one of Hofbauer's disciples: "A sermon on the Catholic Church was so rare an occurrence that we young people rejoiced when the preacher merely mentioned the words 'the Holy Catholic Church' in the pulpit." Another contemporary and member of the Hofbauer Circle, Frederick von Held, asserts that both in society and in the pulpit it came to be a point of etiquette to avoid all reference to the revealed religion. Phrases directly expressive of Catholic teaching or even of ordinary Christian doctrines had been relegated to the dictionaries. The spirit of the Government moved in the selfsame direction. The civil authorities frowned upon every clear exposition of religious truth. As Beidtel observes, they seemed to fear, "that a clear knowledge of Catholic dogmas might give birth to sectarian views, and that a clear knowledge of the history of the Church might lead the common people to compare the present with the past." [2]

Hofbauer's sermons must have acted like high explosives hurled into the camp of the enemy. He had no regard for prevailing opinions when there was question of Religion and Faith. The Holy Eucharist, the Veneration of the Blessed Virgin and of the Saints, Confession, Indulgences, Purgatory, Hell, the Devil — these and other ostracized truths he fearlessly preached from the pulpit, and with the greatest clearness, heedless alike of prohibitions and of popular opinion. The subjects to which he was ever reverting with special emphasis, however, were the Church, the Authority of the Church, and the Papacy. Nowadays such topics are nothing new or striking in the Catholic pulpit; but in those days such sermons were extremely few and far between. The people, who at heart had remained staunch Catholics, were overjoyed at hearing again a truly Catholic preacher who was not afraid to speak out and call things by their proper names. With Hofbauer the Catholic sermon was restored to honor. Then, too, the manner of Hofbauer's preaching had its own special appeal: it was so different from the stiff, formal, polished style of the fashionable preacher. Hofbauer was in the fullest sense of the term a popular preacher; he preached according to the

[2] Beidtel, II. p. 108.

inspiration of the moment, not according to a studied, premeditated sketch. He was not always choice in his expressions; at times he was even coarse. A contemporary describes him as a natural, agreeable, and jovial preacher.

Nevertheless, the people not only listened to his sermons willingly and interestedly, but returned to their homes different men and women. When those witnesses who had once heard him preach came to speak of the effects produced by his sermons, they always expressed the greatest surprise that a method of preaching so unpretentious should bring forth such remarkable fruits. "People in his audience burst into tears, repented and renounced sin, and resolved to lead virtuous lives; such," declares one of his hearers, "were the effects produced by Hofbauer's sermons." It was no unusual sight to see some one waiting for him in the sacristy immediately after the sermon, to consult him on some matter of conscience or to go to confession. A certain aged official declared that though he had previously heard many excellent and renowned preachers, he had always remained the same old sinner; but that a single sermon of Hofbauer's sufficed to convert him. The Saint's exhortations, couched as they usually were in pithy, striking sentences, clung to the memory for years; and even the tone of voice in which he uttered them was not soon forgotten.

The whole secret of this enviable success of the Saint's sermons, in spite of the absence of all rhetorical display, was thus summed up by one of his hearers: "The marvelous attractive power of his sermons must be traced to no other source than his strong, living faith, — a faith that had become, as it were, the very breath of his life and an essential part of his very being, and which was mirrored in every feature of his countenance and in his every gesture and action. Thus, to give but a single example, when preaching on the Incarnation, he would reverently clasp his hands as he said: 'Our very own flesh He hath taken unto Himself.' These simple words, uttered with an apostle's conviction and accompanied by a gesture so expressive, impressed all his hearers, and especially me, so deeply that any doubt we might have had concerning the divinity and humanity of Jesus Christ must at once have

been dispelled." The same witness graphically describes Hofbauer's unique manner of preaching, when he declares that the Saint might truthfully have begun his every sermon with the words with which the Beloved Disciple begins one of his Epistles: "That which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled . . . we declare unto you." (1 John, i, 1.) The message that Hofbauer announced from the pulpit was the message of one who had reached very close to the realm of vision. He did not advance many arguments for what he said; he stated and affirmed as one that had seen and heard and handled the things whereof he spoke. His sermons were public acts of faith that carried one irresistibly and victoriously along on the flood-tide of his own full convictions. What heart could have remained unmoved as it beheld him, vanquished by the power of his faith and love, sinking to his knees in the course of his sermons, to adore the Blessed Sacrament? At such moments he appeared to be transfigured. The calm, even tenor of his being then made way for the oncoming, panting surge of pathos; his countenance seemed aglow with a flame that was not of earth, and a lightning-like brilliance flashed from his eyes. Some of his hearers even declared that they had beheld him surrounded by a heavenly light in the pulpit. Philip Veith in his old age was still wont to relate to his family how he had thus seen the Saint.

Hofbauer's audience was made up mostly of the common people. Gradually, however, persons of all classes and of every station in life went to hear him: students, savants, artists, public officials, and persons of the aristocracy. If he was ever tempted to defer in his sermons to the educated portion of his audience at the expense of the ordinary people, he never succumbed to the temptation. Even though he beheld among his listeners his most scholarly friends, such as Mueller, Schlegel, and Dorothy, he never deviated one jot or tittle from his usual practice of keeping his discourse intelligible to the most unlettered person present. He invariably began his sermons in the selfsame way: "To-day I shall preach a sermon so plain and so simple that the most unlearned among you and

even every little child will be able to understand it." [3] He used this introduction so often that his auditors grew weary of hearing it. Still, the people realized fully that he would keep his promise to preach in a clear and simple style, so much so indeed that many mothers were soon observed bringing their children to his sermons and trying to keep them attentive.

That Hofbauer had found it necessary to discover new forms in which to clothe and reveal the truths of salvation, and that he applied himself to this task, but without success, is an assertion based upon a misunderstanding. The saying so often heard from his lips, and incorrectly quoted nowadays in support of this contention, namely, " that the Gospel had to be preached entirely anew," the Saint himself understood and meant in quite another sense. According to his own conviction and personal experience, Catholics to a great extent had lost the knowledge and comprehension of the body of Catholic teaching; the Gospel, therefore, must be preached anew — that is to say, preached again — not necessarily in a new form or style, or as a novelty, as it must, almost of necessity, be preached in a missionary country to the heathen. It was for this very reason that he endeavored to be as plain and clear as possible in his pulpit utterances, so that all his hearers might easily understand him. The fact that Hofbauer attracted to his sermons and held about his pulpit men like Schlegel, Werner, Mueller, the philosopher Guenther, students and professors from the University, proves that a truly apostolic sermon can satisfy both the child and the learned adult. Such apostolic men are, of course, scarce. The average preacher cannot afford to set aside the helps of rhetoric as a Saint can. It may be remarked, however, that Hofbauer's sermons gained by the fact that his thoughts were not clothed in attractive language; the absence of literary ornamentation only served to make the vigorous beauty of his faith shine forth the more brilliantly. It was good, it was even necessary for Vienna to possess, besides its many fashionable preachers with their shallow rhetoric, such a preacher as Hofbauer. The common people were not slow to notice the wide chasm that yawned between him and them. One could fre-

[3] Taken from a police-report. (Innerkofler, p. 470, note 2.)

quently hear it said: "If you wish to hear a grand speaker, go to this or that church; but if you wish to hear an apostle, go to St. Ursula's."

It will suffice to add but a word about the preparation which Hofbauer made for his sermons. Guenther remarked that one could readily perceive that the sermons of this apostolic man were the combined product of previous meditation and of the inspiration of the moment. During the week he would get some one to read to him the Gospel for the following Sunday; and having heard the Gospel he would meditate upon it in his spare moments. At times, after only a few passages had been read, he gave a sign to the reader to stop by saying: "*Sufficit!*" ("That will do.") The thoughts suggested by the Gospel would pour in upon him like a steady stream. Usually it was Don Pajalich who did him this kindness. One day Hofbauer asked him what he considered the best preparation for a sermon; and without waiting for an answer, the Saint struck his knees with his hands, wishing thereby to signify that prayer was the most needful preparation for preaching the Word of God.

2. *Hofbauer at the Altar.* — But if one wished fully to understand Hofbauer's success as a preacher, one must have seen him at the altar. His deep devotion to Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament was but another manifestation of his faith, more attractive perhaps than even his utterances in the pulpit. Those who beheld him at the altar could not find words to describe adequately the impression he made upon them. A certain man relates that once when assisting at Holy Mass in St. Ursula's, he could not take his eyes from the Saint, and he assures us, moreover, that as often as he entered the same church in later years the vision of the Saint arose just as vividly before him. When the Saint carried the Blessed Sacrament from the main altar to the side-altar in the Italian Church, he traversed the whole long way with eyes closed fast and head bowed lovingly over the ciborium, so that one involuntarily feared that he would stumble and fall in going up and down the steps. It cost him no struggle on such occasions to practise recollection and devotion. On the contrary, whatever struggle there was arose from his efforts to

prevent the fervor of his soul from becoming too evident to others. Only the half-suppressed sighs, the tears that coursed down his cheeks while engaged in his favorite occupation of distributing Holy Communion, revealed what was going on in his heart. While the *Tantum ergo* was being sung as he stood facing the people with the monstrance in his hands, he would fix his eyes steadily, but most respectfully, upon the Sacred Host, or draw the monstrance close to his breast or forehead. It was most inspiring to see with what devout attention he would frequently assist very young priests at the altar. Men noted for their piety, like the Papal Auditor Muzzi, loved to go to St. Ursula's on great feast-days, where they would draw quite near the altar, that they might easily see the Saint and be edified by his devout celebration of the Holy Sacrifice.

What happened at those times when he thought himself alone and unobserved before the throne of his Eucharistic Lord, has been revealed by Sister Thaddea, an Ursuline nun, who watched him on such occasions. Once she discovered him kneeling before the tabernacle. Fancying himself quite alone, he made no effort to conceal his feelings; his countenance was all aglow with joy and love; repeatedly he threw kisses toward the Blessed Sacrament; in short, the whole scene resembled nothing so much as the tenderest meetings between a lover and his beloved. Sister Thaddea hastened to summon one of her companions, and from their hiding place the two nuns watched this scene for a while, — a scene that told them more than the most eloquent of sermons.

The apostolate of our Saint has been called a Eucharistic Apostolate, and not without reason. The Real Presence of the God-man Jesus Christ in the Blessed Sacrament is the center of all Catholic faith and devotion. The Blessed Eucharist will, therefore, occupy an important place in the life of every one of God's Saints. Aside from this, if the devotion to the Blessed Sacrament occupied in the life and labors of Hofbauer a place unusually prominent even for a Saint, we must seek the reason for this in the condition of the times. The "Illuminati" and the protagonists of Jansenism had removed this beautiful Mystery of Faith and Love to an almost unapproachable distance

from the eyes and the hearts of the faithful. At Warsaw the Saint deliberately attacked and scathingly denounced the Jansenistic school, which had won over to its ranks the officials of the city. What else was "The Perpetual Mission" at St. Benno's but one long, uninterrupted, magnificent celebration in honor of the Blessed Eucharist? The Countess Choloniewska writes: "He regarded it as his greatest happiness to be able to assist in spreading devotion to the Blessed Sacrament over the whole world, and to awaken in the hearts of the faithful an ardent desire to receive their Eucharistic Lord frequently in Holy Communion. Filled with the longing to see the Blessed Sacrament surrounded all over the world with all the pomp and grandeur that love could inspire, he introduced the solemn adoration of the Blessed Sacrament in Warsaw, where he had found a lamentable forgetfulness of Jesus Christ, and in general the most woful lack of all true devotion. The daily adoration of Our Saviour hidden in the Sacrament of the Altar soon produced among the people in that city the richest fruits of piety."

The Jansenistic spirit was equally rampant in Vienna. The Saint was frequently requested to prepare the little ones for their First Holy Communion. This he always most cheerfully consented to do. Nevertheless, if these children had arrived at the age of ten or twelve, he never omitted on such occasions severely to condemn what he called the "French custom." In regard to the solemnization of the divine services, he was, it is true, much hampered in Vienna. This restraint, however, did not prevent him from conducting the Devotion of the Forty Hours' with all possible solemnity at St. Ursula's, in the Italian Church, and at the Church of the Mechitarists. For the closing services of this Devotion he usually invited the Nuncio to act as the officiating Prelate. He never neglected to visit the other churches in Vienna in which this beautiful Devotion was in progress. On the more solemn feasts of the Church he was wont to invite the Seminarians to assist at the altar. For a funeral service he often succeeded in gathering a surprisingly large number of priests to be present in the sanctuary. The civil authorities did not, of course, look with favor upon the processions which he held in Church; and the Corpus Christi procession they regarded with partic-

ular aversion. He himself usually attended to the decorations of the altars.

Thus the convent-church which was formerly almost entirely deserted, became under his directorship, the center of the greatest devotion. The distinction between Sundays and Feast-days disappeared almost completely at St. Ursula's, as it had at St. Benno's. His confessional was daily besieged by penitents, for many persons received Holy Communion every day, even at the latest Masses. Entire families, even those of the higher classes of society, might be seen here, kneeling together on the floor of the church, rapt in deep devotion. From St. Ursula's there went forth a quickening spirit of fervor and piety, reaching out to the other parishes and reviving in other churches the lost art of the devout Catholic life. Sebastian Job, who came to Vienna in the spring of 1817, writing his impressions of the capital in a letter to a friend shortly after his arrival, says: "I had indeed pictured Vienna to myself in glowing colors, but I find it better than I imagined it to be. The churches here are more frequented than elsewhere, even on ordinary week-days; and every day I see many approaching the altar to receive Holy Communion." If we take into consideration that this was written nearly ten years after Hofbauer began his apostolate in Vienna, that during that time the number of his penitents must have become very large, and that he urged all these without exception to a frequent reception of Holy Communion, we may get some idea of the results of our Saint's activity in behalf of devotion to the Blessed Eucharist.

Veneration of the Blessed Virgin Mary had likewise disappeared to a great extent in the Catholic life of those days. Even the Catholic theologians of that period felt themselves called upon to combat devotion to the Mother of God as an excrescence of religious enthusiasm. Even in good Catholic families, the devotion of the Holy Rosary, to give but a single example, had become something quite unknown. In Vienna it was considered quite remarkable that there was a priest at St. Ursula's who blessed rosaries. This form of prayer was Hofbauer's favorite devotion till the end of his life. Walking through the streets and during his leisure moments at home, he

almost always had the rosary in his hands. Moreover, he made it one of the duties of the members of his Congregation of Oblates to defend this particular devotion which was so much ridiculed " by the heretics of modern times."

For himself the veneration of the Blessed Virgin was simply a necessity of his heart that would not, and could not be denied. It pained him deeply to hear any one mention the name of Mary without prefixing to it her title of honor. " Of which Mary are you speaking? " he would ask. In his letters he tenderly and reverently called her " the Mother of Our Lord." It was like a great feast-day for his soul, if on his journeys he could reach any of the celebrated shrines of the Blessed Virgin. Father Sabelli relates, that once at Altoetting the Saint could scarcely tear himself away from the famous shrine of Our Lady there, and that he lingered on to examine with childlike joy the many votive tablets announcing the glories of his Queen. While in Vienna, as has already been remarked, his pilgrimages in honor of the sweet Mother of Christ were the only occasions that took him beyond the confines of the capital. Twice he made a pilgrimage on foot to " Maria-Schossberg " in Upper Hungary; and frequently he went also to " Maria-Taferl." His favorite place of pilgrimage, however, was " Mariazell," to which he repaired at least once a year. " Mariazell " was indeed a spot that must naturally have attracted a man like Hofbauer. Perhaps nowhere else in all Josephist Austria could the Catholic life of faith express itself with all the eloquence of the liturgical splendor of days that were no more. When the Saint beheld the hosts of pilgrims that flocked to this shrine and heard their hymns resounding through the spacious edifice, his enthusiasm knew no bounds. The loftiest sentiments would well up in his breast, and he would challenge all the unbelievers of the world to find in their scepticism a satisfactory explanation of this spectacle.

3. *Hofbauer in the Confessional.* — During the last four years of his life, however, the principal sphere of our Saint's ministerial labors was no longer the pulpit, as in former years, but the confessional. As a rule, at least one-third of his time was daily taken up with work having to do with the direction of consciences. By degrees he came to be much in demand as

a spiritual guide and counselor. Persons of all classes sought him out in order to make their confession to him. He himself declared that, with the exception of a Pope and an Emperor, people of all walks of life had come to confession to him. Men, both old and young, preferred to confess to him at his home. Oftentimes in the evening when he was surrounded at home by his students, some man would call and ask to go to confession, and the Saint would then conduct the penitent to an adjoining room.

He was a confessor of extraordinary qualifications. Alphonsus von Klinkowstroem likens him as a spiritual physician to the renowned Pathologist Dr. Oppolzer of Vienna, one of the cleverest diagnosticians of his day. Hofbauer's innate, instinctive sense for divining the secrets of the human heart had been perfected by the experience he had gathered during many decades of years as a director of consciences. His penitents felt persuaded that they were entirely safe in the hands of such a guide. The exactitude with which he discharged the arduous duties connected with this delicate task was for them a sufficient guarantee of his trustworthiness.

When the condition of a soul required it, and circumstances permitted, he always demanded that penitents, wishing to make a general confession, make a very careful preparation for this act which he regarded as a most important one. On one occasion, immediately after the sermon, a ragged young man asked him to hear his confession. Hofbauer took him by the hand, gazed into his eyes a moment, and then said: "Not yet; come along with me first." He took the youth home with him and detained him there for a few days, to give him ample opportunity to prepare his soul in quiet retirement for the great account of his life. On the wall of the room to which he assigned the lad there hung a beautiful picture of the Saviour being scourged at the pillar. Hofbauer pointed to this picture, and said: "Francis, learn your lesson here!" Francis looked back over his gay and checkered past. The wild youth had ended his career as a street-hero in Vienna by running away from home. He then joined the army, but deserted the colors and fled to Paris. There he remained until he could endure life in the French capital no longer. Reduced to the

last extremity, he returned to Vienna, without venturing, however, to go back to his mother, who was a very coarse, uncouth woman. A good angel one day led the vagabond to St. Ursula's. As he entered the church, Hofbauer was in the pulpit describing the remorse and qualms of a bad conscience. The young man dreaded above all things else to meet his mother; but Hofbauer assured him that he should have nothing to fear from that quarter. The poor woman was not a little surprised at receiving one day an invitation to breakfast at Hofbauer's. The Saint adroitly directed the conversation to the subject of her children. She spoke of all of these but Francis, whom she did not even mention by name. When Hofbauer finally made direct inquiries about the lad, she replied laconically: "Oh, he is long since gone to the gallows!" Hofbauer smilingly replied: "Oh, no; they do not hang people so quickly as all that;" and rising, he flung open the door of the adjoining room. Francis appeared, and weeping bitterly, cast himself at his mother's feet. The embittered woman at once launched forth into a terrific tirade against the prodigal; but Hofbauer soon put an end to the harangue by saying: "That will do now; that is enough. Now come, both of you, and have breakfast together." The dreaded hour had blown safely over. But there were others as well, to whom Francis owed atonement. His mother had formerly served the milk at the convent of the Salesian nuns, and Francis had committed much mischief in the convent-garden. Hofbauer informed the Superioress that on the following day he would bring an Augustine to her. The Superioress thought he meant to present them with a picture of St. Augustine, and declined the gift with thanks, as they already had one. But the next day the Saint appeared with a living Augustine, who humbly begged pardon for his boyish pranks in the days gone by. The work of reconciliation with God and man was now complete. Francis, however, no longer wished to leave the man who had been a saviour to him. He begged for admission among the members of the Congregation, and then continued his studies.

This young man was none other than Francis Haetscher, whose acquaintance we have already made, and whom Hof-

bauer sent to Wallachia, in 1815, with Forthuber and Libotzki. Haetscher as a missionary resumed his wandering life, but now in the service of God and for the salvation of souls. He labored not only in Wallachia, but also in various parts of Austria and in England; and finally he crossed the seas to the New World and carried the message of Christ to the Indians of North America. He died at an advanced age in the Redemptorist Convent at Leoben in Steiermark.

It was not always possible, of course, for Hofbauer to care in this tender manner for every lost sheep returning to the true fold. Still, what has been related of Haetscher was not by any means an isolated case. Hofbauer considered it his sacred duty to seek out souls that had gone astray. A certain artist has pictured him as a good shepherd, travel-weary and resting on his staff, but triumphantly carrying the lost sheep home with him. This is undoubtedly the most truthful picturization of his apostolate in Vienna. It was indeed remarkable how expert he was in divining at a glance the spiritual needs of mankind. While going his way, apparently lost in thought and meditation, he never failed to notice when any one was in distress. One day a lad that had just been dismissed from school was wandering dejectedly through the streets. In St. John's Street he encountered the Saint, who immediately called out to him: "Come here, my boy! Something is troubling you!" And without further ado he took the lad home with him, listened kindly to his little tale of woe, and then poured balm of comfort into his mind and heart. Francis Haubner, as the lad was named, grew to be an excellent man and an exemplary Catholic.[4]

A man about to commit suicide by casting himself into the Danube was saved by Hofbauer at the last moment. Genially offering the man a pinch of snuff, he led him into a conversation, and in a short while succeeded in filling his head with different notions and bringing him to a better frame of mind. A similar incident happened at the time of the collapse of the National Treasury when many rich people were reduced to

[4] In 1848, Haubner, forgetful of his own safety, generously came to the defense of the Redemptorists in Vienna when they were threatened by the populace. Two of his sons entered the priesthood; one of these became Canon of St. Stephen's in Vienna. He himself died in 1892.

pauperism overnight. One day, as Hofbauer was walking along the Danube with a friend, he suddenly broke off the conversation and hurried toward a lady who was making her way sadly and dejectedly toward the river. He had instinctively divined her intentions. The lady was a certain Barbara N., who had hitherto lived in most comfortable circumstances, but was now impoverished in consequence of the bankruptcy of the Government. Being very worldly-minded, vain, and without any sort of religion, she lacked the moral courage to adapt herself to the condition to which she had been brought down. She, too, had resolved to put an end to her life in the waters of the Danube. Without parley Hofbauer bluntly asked her what she had in mind. She frankly confessed her intentions, and at the same time pictured to him the abject misery which had so suddenly come upon her. The Saint listened, then stooped down and picked up a handful of earth which he let seep through his fingers as he said: "What is money? Nothing but a handful of dirt!" He succeeded in persuading her to return to the city with him, where he secured lodging for her in one of the houses which the Ursulines had for rent. In the course of the next few days, she made a general confession to him. With that she experienced a thorough change of heart, and for the rest of her life she persevered in well-doing. Hofbauer himself called her a holy penitent. For years she was a familiar figure in the churches of Vienna, and, because she was always attired in black, the people called her "black Barbara." Her sister, the wealthy wife of one of the counselors of the Government, later offered to receive her into her home as one of the family, but Barbara declined the offer, remarking that she had learned to know better, and would remain where she was. She ended her saintly life as a pensioner in the hospital of the Nuns of St. Elizabeth in Vienna.[5]

[5] William Smets, the son of the famous actress Sophia Schroeder, came to Vienna in 1816. He, too, seems to have been saved from suicide by Hofbauer. In consequence of his many failures in his theatrical enterprises in Vienna, he was reduced to the direst want and became extremely melancholy. No particulars of his relations with Hofbauer are known to us. Smets's biographer (J. Muellermeister, *William Smets, His Life and Writings,* Aix-la-Chapelle, 1877, pp. 53–57) has only this to say: "It was Father Hofbauer who secretly kept our poet from a violent act, and preserved for him his temporal and eternal

Timid and scrupulous souls as well as great sinners sought out this experienced director of souls. The most inveterate of these unfortunate scrupulants, who robbed the busy Saint of many a precious hour, was a certain Kraus of Vienna. Poor Kraus's doubts and scruples, it seemed, would never end. Good-naturedly the Saint was wont to remark: "One Kraus I can stand; but two of him would be the death of me!" Among his own confrères, also, Hofbauer had to deal with one such scrupulant, namely, the young Father Forthuber. When, on one occasion, at the Communion of his Mass, the poor Father seemed never to make an end of purifying the paten, the Saint stole up to him and whispered: "Joseph, do leave something for the angels!" The Saint found little difficulty in giving generously of his time and pity to such sorely-tried souls; but it was more difficult for him to be patient with that notorious class of penitents, known to every confessor, who very seldom go to confession and then, when at last they do, have little or nothing at all to confess. With such persons he was apt to grow bitter and sarcastic: "My, my! but you are a saint already!" he would say; "we shall have to hasten to light a few candles before you!" Once, according to an anecdote, he made use of a very drastic means of bringing a certain penitent of this type to a realization of the disordered state of her conscience. It happened in the sacristy of the Ursuline Church. Hofbauer, who at the moment was engaged in hearing this particular person's confession, suddenly called out to the sacristan: "Andrew! come here at once and place this woman upon the altar, for she is already a perfect saint!"

Since the number of his penitents was so great, it will readily be understood that Hofbauer was frequently called to the bedside of the sick and the dying. On these occasions, more than at any other time, his remarkable qualities as a physician of the soul, were prominently, but unconsciously, exposed to view. He never hesitated to acquaint his penitents

life, when he was seized with despair on account of his apparently unhappy lot in life." Acting upon Hofbauer's advice, Smets returned to his home in the Rhineland in 1817. In this young man Hofbauer preserved for Germany a poet who, unfortunately, is much neglected, a worthy priest, and a zealous pastor of souls. Smets died in 1848, as Canon at Aix-la-Chapelle.

with the seriousness of their physical condition. Once he was called to the bedside of a very sick man. No one in the family ventured to tell the patient that his end was approaching; as a consequence of this neglect the dying man, perfectly unaware of his serious condition, would not yet hear of their calling a priest to administer the last rites of religion. When Hofbauer arrived, the ladies of the house anxiously entreated him before entering the sick-room, not to frighten the invalid. Hofbauer quietly let them talk. Opening the door, behind which lay the sick man out of the immediate view of those who entered, Hofbauer, to the horror of the family, shouted in a loud voice: "Where is the sick man that does not want to go to confession?" His family's fears proved to be entirely without foundation. The patient, taken completely by surprise, resigned himself unreservedly into the hands of the saintly physician of his soul.

The Saint was equally adept in instilling into his dying penitents an almost positive certainty of salvation and a foretaste of heaven. When the penetrating glance of this man, who lived wholly with God, pierced the veil of the future and looked into the divine mysteries, and then promised salvation to any one, the pledge he had spoken was more than a pious, comforting exhortation such as every priest is wont to whisper to the dying; it was accepted as a message from heaven. On her deathbed the young Countess Liechtenstein, a niece of Julia Zichy's, kept joyously repeating that Father Hofbauer had promised heaven to her. Baron Moser, who was being whisked swiftly along to the portals of death by a malignant cancer, persisted in playing his daily game of cards with a friend — a thing that to his wife seemed very improper for one in his condition; but the Baron would not let himself be dissuaded: Father Hofbauer had not forbidden it, and there was an end of the matter.

At times, it is true, our Saint was not spared the sorrow of returning home from some deathbed without having succeeded in inspiring the sick person with sentiments of true repentance. Thus, he repeatedly visited the celebrated eye-specialist, Dr. Barth, in his last illness, but to no purpose. The unbelieving doctor, who was notorious all over Vienna for his eccentricities,

regarded Hofbauer only with an esthetic eye. Externally, the whole appearance of the Saint captivated him and called forth his enthusiastic praise. Hence, as the Saint entered his room, Barth greeted him with the words: "Behold! The head of an Apostle!" Hofbauer was a match for him; his ready rejoinder was: "The head of a Socrates!"

But such failures were only the rare exceptions. If a soul seemed but a few hours removed from eternity, and he saw that he would have but very little time to gain that soul for heaven, his charity knew no bounds. How he then prayed to God for such a soul has been revealed to us by Sister Thaddea. Once, while she was convalescent, she went to the choir during the noon hour. The community was at table, and the church was deserted by all but Hofbauer, whom she saw kneeling at the foot of the altar. His prayer, however, was neither a calm meditation nor a silent petition; she heard him sighing pitifully and imploring the Saviour aloud: "Lord," he begged, "give me this soul; for if Thou refuse, I shall go to Thy Mother. . . ." So much the unseen witness overheard; but she noticed that his cheeks were wet with tears, and beheld him finally cast himself before the altar. Deeply affected, the nun retired without having been observed, to unite her own prayer before an image of the Blessed Virgin to that of the Saint before the tabernacle of his hidden Lord.

How he wrestled at the deathbed itself to win a soul from hell, is aptly illustrated by the following incident which he himself once narrated to the Ursuline nuns. He had been called to the bedside of an impenitent sinner at the point of death. As he entered the room the sick man greeted him with a veritable shower of insults. All his efforts to quiet the man proved futile, and his kind admonitions fell upon barren ground. At last the Saint went to the door as if about to take his departure, but remained standing there intently watching the patient. The latter in a rage demanded to know what he was still waiting for. Very coolly and deliberately the Saint replied: "I have seen very many good people die; now I wish to see how a soul that is damned departs out of this life." The sick man had not expected such a reply. He stopped blaspheming, and suddenly grew quiet and thoughtful. The

next moment he called Hofbauer back to his bedside. "Father," he pleaded in a voice broken with sobs, "can you forgive me?" The Saint remained with him until the end came. Even in his death-agony, the penitent sinner affectionately clung to the hand of him who had saved his soul from an eternal doom.

4. Frequently the direction of conscience which the Saint undertook, developed into a spiritual direction extending over the rest of the penitent's lifetime. Even outside the confessional people sought him out to ask his assistance and advice in every sort of need and trouble. Replying to a certain lady who had asked his advice with regard to the choice of a confessor, Werner wrote: "I can recommend to you no better confessor than Hofbauer, and if furthermore you could persuade yourself to visit him out of the confessional at his own home, and there open your heart to him, I can assure you that your spiritual needs will be well provided for."[6] A few passages culled from the reminiscences of Mary Rizy, will serve to show what sort of influence he exercised over those who placed themselves trustfully under his guidance. Mary Rizy, a niece of Grillparzer, was at this time engaged as governess in the house of Count Gilleis. Ten years after the death of Hofbauer she penned the following reminiscences, which show us what manner of director the Saint was. "From the very first time that it was my good fortune to meet him, I never came away from an interview with him but that my mind had been set entirely at rest, although at this period I was inwardly very much troubled. Frequently, when he was prevented from listening to me, or could continue the interview no longer, he would give me his blessing and say: 'What I cannot say to you now, the Holy Ghost will suggest to you.' And invariably it so happened; for I knew exactly what advice he would have given in such and such circumstances, and when I later mentioned how I had acted, he would simply smile. Other penitents of his have told me that they had similar experiences. Often upon his mere approach all my doubts and fears vanished; and this I discovered even long before I began to place in him that implicit confidence which I gave him later. I

[6] Floeck, II. p. 349.

cannot recall any interior trouble that ever continued to torment me once I was in his presence."

Further on she writes: "Shortly after my conversion I asked his permission to read a certain so-called moral romance. His only answer was: 'Do you, then, already know everything that is true, that you now want to read falsehoods?' These simple words of his called forth in me a greater disgust for that kind of reading-matter than anything else I had ever heard on this subject. . . . On another occasion I made a similar request to read a very learned spiritual book. He replied: 'If you wish to read this work in order to become more learned, you may read it; but if your only motive in desiring to read it is to become more virtuous, leave it alone: you do not need it.' He often said to me: 'You must lay aside the woman in you, and become a man, if you want to amount to anything.' Discouraged, because I was hampered in the work of education entrusted to me, I went to him for solace and advice. 'What peculiar ideas people have of education,' he said, shaking his head regretfully; 'as if,' he added, 'we could do more than pray. Remember, success comes from God.' As this remark, however, failed to quiet me, and as I expressed my fears that I should be losing time, if for six years more I retained my position in which I could accomplish so little, he said very emphatically: 'If in all those years you do nothing more than prevent a single sin, be assured that you will not have lost any of that time.'

"One day, shortly after the Congress of Vienna, I found him deeply affected by the news he had just received of the death of four of the sovereigns of Europe. 'In fifty years,' he said to me, 'all those that took part in this magnificent Congress will be wearing their crowns on a hideous skull, and nothing will remain to them but their good and evil deeds!'

"Another time I found him all fatigued and worn-out, and he explained that he had just returned from a distant suburb. There he had attended a sick man who had not been to confession for seventeen years, but who died repentant. 'It is a good thing,' he said, 'when such a one lives far away in one of the suburbs; for then I have ample time to recite the rosary on the way, and I have learned from experience that sinners

invariably repent before death, whenever I have had a chance to say the beads before reaching them.'

"Sometimes it happened that I was ushered into his room just as he was reciting the Divine Office. At such times, he would look up with a smile and say in his genial way: 'If you are not in a hurry, I shall continue to pray, so that I need not begin all over again; but if you cannot wait, I can stop without much trouble.'

"If I had chanced to call several times before meeting him at home, he would say at our next interview: 'I am very, very sorry that you have come so often on my account; but be assured that the good Lord has counted your steps.'

"He took great delight in giving away small articles of devotion. Whenever he learned that I intended going to the country-districts, he would give me a number of religious pictures, rosaries, and prayer-leaflets, saying: 'Here; try to do some good for God with these!'

"There were two little pictures to which he was attached with especial devotion. Whenever he showed them to any one, he would immediately add in his own inimitable, simple way: 'These I shall not give away!' This was no unnecessary precaution; for those close to him had grown so accustomed to receiving at once from him any possession of his which they praised or admired, that he had to forestall the danger of being deprived likewise of these two favorite pictures.

"One day, when I had complained of the prejudice existing in a certain country-district against the devotion of the Holy Rosary and the objections urged against its being introduced, — objections which I often knew not how to answer, — he called Herr Springer who just happened to be visiting him, and said: 'Come, write the answers down for her, so that she may not forget them!'

"During one of my visits to him I bitterly bemoaned the fact that circumstances obliged me to remain in the world for yet a number of years, and expressed my fears that, on account of my age, I should not later be admitted into any convent. For a few moments the Saint made no reply, but sat with eyes closed and hands folded, buried in thought. Suddenly he looked up, and said: 'You may be at ease about that.

When those years have passed, you will go to a convent where they will receive you. For the present, however, do not make any plans!'" . . . Several years later Mary Rizy entered the Order of the Redemptoristines, which at this time had not yet been introduced into Austria, and in fact was not even known there; hence, the Saint's warning against her making any plans for her future entrance into religion.

This last excerpt from the memoirs of Mary Rizy, leads us to another phase of the Saint's work as director of souls — the assistance he rendered his penitents in deciding their vocation. The foregoing chapters have taught us that he could be very circumspect when consulted in regard to vocations to the priesthood or to the Religious State. But once he had become convinced of the genuineness of any one's calling to the religious life, he did all in his power to lead that one to the goal of his desires. Penetrated as he was with the spirit of a living faith, he viewed the religious life only in the light of eternity. "Only on your deathbed," he once assured a Salesian nun, "will you realize what a great grace it is to be called to the religious state. All worldly grandeur and glory are as nothing in comparison with it." He told this same nun in confidence, that as often as he passed by the convent of some Religious Order, he raised his hat twice — the first time out of reverence for the Blessed Sacrament, and the second time out of respect for the spouses of Christ residing there. No exertion was too great for him, if it helped to clear the way to the convent for any young woman called to this state of life.

A certain young lady of excellent family was very eager to join the Carmelites in Prague; but her parents offered strenuous objections and positively refused their consent. She revealed to Hofbauer, who was well acquainted with her family, the obstacles she was encountering. The Saint thereupon appointed a time when she was again to broach the subject to her parents. Hardly had the delicate question been introduced into the conversation as pre-arranged, when there was a knock at the door — Father Hofbauer had come to visit the family. Ingenuously he inquired what they had been conversing about as he entered and interrupted them, and he then spoke with such warmth and decision in favor of the young lady's voca-

tion, that the parents desisted from offering further objections.

The story of the religious vocation of the Salesian nun, Sister Antonia Ott, a farmer's daughter from the suburbs of Vienna, is typical. " For a long time," she writes, " I secretly entertained a great longing for the religious state, but knew not what to do to attain the object of my desires. In the spring of 1816, I went to the market in the Seiler Place in Vienna to sell butter and eggs. While I stood there waiting for customers, I noticed a venerable priest crossing the square. He appeared to me as one transfigured, and an interior voice kept telling me that this priest could assist me in gaining admission into some convent. I watched him and saw him turn into St. John's Street. The impression he had made upon me remained indelibly fixed in my mind. In spirit I constantly beheld his saintly, kindly mien before me, and I often thought that I should like to go to this priest and tell him of my heart's dearest wish, if only I knew where he lived. Two years later, on Maundy Thursday, which in the year 1818 fell on March 19, I was again at the market. After dispatching my business there, I wished to visit some church to perform my devotions on the holyday, and not knowing where else to go, I made my way to the Church of the Ursulines. To my intense joy, I recognized in the priest who was conducting the services and who carried the Blessed Sacrament to the repository, the same whom in my heart I had so long desired to see and meet. . . . One month after this I sought him out and for the first time made my confession to him, at the same time making known to him my wish to enter the religious state. Father Hofbauer listened patiently and then said: ' We shall both pray fervently, and all will turn out right; but you must come to the city.' And, indeed, Father Hofbauer took the liveliest interest in me: he obtained board and lodging for me, had me instructed in reading, writing, mathematics, and later in French, and provided a course of training in womanly occupations, so as to fit me for entrance into the Convent of the Salesian Nuns. In October, 1819, Father Hofbauer joyously witnessed my reception in this convent, but I have never seen him or spoken to him since."

5. The vast majority of Hofbauer's penitents, a contemporary declares, was made up of students, members of the nobility, and female domestics. We have already observed him in his capacity as the spiritual director of students. Some of his sayings, as they have been preserved to us, are apt to leave the impression that he was a hater of women. Such, for example, is the remark which he is reported to have made, namely: "I thank the Lord that I am not a woman, and that I have not a wife." But Hofbauer was not a hater of women. We must bear in mind the pedagogical purpose which such remarks served, and which for that reason he seldom made, unless he was speaking to students or to young priests. He wished merely to point out to them the characteristic weaknesses of women, which are apt to become a danger to both women and men. "So long as a woman has not ceased to be a woman," he would say to them, "there is always danger." Here we shall readily recall the unreserved admiration he expressed for some of the women of Vienna's nobility at that time, such as Louisa von Klinkowstroem and the Countesses Zichy and Széchényi. In his dealings with women, it is true, he was noticeably more reserved than with men; he was apt to be rather abrupt, even a little harsh, with them, yet always friendly and fatherly. A certain witness remarked that one could never determine the color of his eyes. It was precisely this reserve, revealing so visibly the untarnished purity of his soul, that attracted respectable ladies and pious young women to him, and filled them with implicit confidence in him.

The foregoing pages have likewise shown us Hofbauer as the intimate friend and frequent guest in the homes of aristocratic families. Very probably he was well known by name in aristocratic circles, long before he himself came to Vienna. When, in 1797, the Emperor Francis received him in audience, the Monarch remarked that he had heard of Hofbauer's labors in Warsaw; and a police-report significantly states that the Countess Leznowska, née Zichy, the greatest of Hofbauer's panegyrists, was everywhere in society praising his work in Poland. The fact is, that his personal relations with the nobility of Vienna, and even with the Imperial Court, dated back over many years. The police-reports issued during

the Congress of Vienna, mention, in addition to the persons already referred to, the family of Baron Doblhoff as being patrons and intimate friends of Hofbauer; and these same documents add that this family in the course of its extensive dealings with the staunch Catholic circles among the nobility and among the civilian class, never lost an opportunity of recommending the Priests of the Redemptorist Order. Likewise bound to Hofbauer by ties of intimate friendship were the following: Prince Fugger-Babenhausen, Prince Albani, Count Guicciardi, Baron Muench-Bellinghausen; the Princess Metternich, and the Countesses Wilczek-Oetingen, Seilern [7] Woyna, Wallstein-Rzewuska, and others. The Saint, moreover, enjoyed the highest esteem also in the house of Prince Bretzenheim, and was particularly admired by the pious Princess.[8]

These intimacies with members of the aristocracy, however, brought the Saint very little natural gratification. He found it burdensome, for example, to dine twice a week at the Széchényis. Notwithstanding his blameless, mortified life, he always feared to relinquish his constant vigilance over his senses. One day on the way to Széchényi's, Dr. Madlener naïvely remarked that he enjoyed in anticipation the pleasure of dining once again with this family. Hofbauer simply replied: "That thought does not cause me the slightest temptation; you know that already;" and these words were accompanied by a significant gesture which Madlener understood to refer to the Saint's bodily mortifications. From the painful expression which his countenance sometimes wore, his more intimate friends were able to judge how seriously he took the

[7] In the family of the wealthy Count Seilern the youthful Grillparzer, a nephew of the Count, filled the position of private tutor at the time. Grillparzer, in his autobiography (WW Edition by M. Necker, XII. p. 51), writes that after his duties as tutor had come to an end, the family was unwilling to keep the verbal promise it had made, to grant him his small allowance until he should have obtained a salaried public office. No one else but Hofbauer was meant when Grillparzer added: "Only the intervention of a priest highly esteemed in the family put an end to the difficulty."

[8] The country-seat at Brunn, near Vienna, where the Seilern and Bretzenheim families at times spent the summer, was the rendezvous of expelled Tyrolese champions of liberty. Speckbacher also lived here during the years 1810–1814. If Hofbauer's relations with the Seilerns and Bretzenheims extended back to those years, he probably saw and conversed also with the "man from Rinn," Haspinger, and other heroes of 1809.

words of the Apostle: "I chastise my body and bring it into subjection, lest perhaps, when I have preached to others, I myself should become a castaway." (1 Cor. ix, 27.) George Passy, the private librarian of the Count, was wont to observe with secret edification the various ruses which the Saint employed to conceal his mortification at table.

Persons like the Countess Julia Zichy, who were naturally drawn toward the interior life, but were constantly exposed to new distractions on account of the manifold demands of their social duties, found in Hofbauer the ideal spiritual director; for he himself had now for many years — in fact, ever since his ordination to the priesthood — been obliged to forego the sweet balm and the quiet atmosphere which the cell of the convent brings to the souls of Religious. There were few persons to whom the Saint vouchsafed so intimate an insight into his interior life as he did to Don Pajalich; and the latter, in his reminiscences of his saintly friend and master, tells us that Hofbauer had prepared "a solitude, a quiet cell, a small oratory" in his own heart. "Into this solitude," continues this same witness, "he withdrew at pleasure at all times and wherever he chanced to be; there he found a safe refuge in every difficulty and in every trial that he encountered either in the exercise of his duties or in the distractions he met with in society. Here in this secret tabernacle he would recall his scattered thoughts, and thus recollected he found no trouble there in giving himself up to the delights of reflection and meditation; hence, even when he was walking through the most crowded streets, his soul was given to acts of faith, hope, charity toward God, love for his neighbor, adoration, thanksgiving, humility, contrition, and absolute self-surrender to God." It was into this kind of interior solitude that he trained his penitents to retire, especially such of them as were exposed to many distractions in consequence of their social duties. It was this practice which Dorothy Schlegel described in one of her letters to her son Philip: "I have received an excellent instruction on this interior recollection from Father Hofbauer, and I find that it invariably helps me to attain the end I so ardently desire. The manner of cultivating this kind of recollection consists, according to Father Hofbauer, in

frequently kneeling in spirit before some familiar altar on which the Blessed Sacrament is reserved, and there — no matter what one's occupations happen to be at the time — placing one's self in the presence of God, and by intimate acts of faith, hope, love, contrition, and adoration, uniting one's self spiritually with Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. I have often tried this, and as often as I did, have succeeded in recollecting myself even in the midst of the greatest tumult, with the result that on those occasions I have tasted the sweetness of a peace which beggars all description."

Hofbauer felt more at home with the families of the ordinary classes. He frequently visited these, especially the bakers of Vienna, faithfully keeping up his former friendship with the members of the Bakers' Guild. His old master Weyrig was still living, and was now a penitent of his former apprentice. His house was conveniently situated next door to the "Eiserne Birne," and scarcely a day passed without Hofbauer's visiting him at least for a few moments. The Saint, moreover, interested himself particularly in the apprentices and journeymen of Vienna, and succeeded in bringing many of these hard-working people back to a better way of life. Master Stand, who instead of Hofbauer had become Weyrig's son-in-law, now conducted the business. We have already spoken of Master Gussl. And Hofbauer personally gave religious instruction to the children of master-baker Aprich, a brother-in-law of Weyrig's, who resided in Rauhenstein Street. Since the time of Josephism, good Catholic parents preferred to confide their children to trustworthy private teachers; thus it happened that during the first few years of his sojourn in Vienna, Hofbauer was engaged as religious instructor in the homes of many of the civilian and aristocratic families. Living in the same house with Aprich was the family of Bieringer, who conducted the inn "Zur Katze." These very respectable people requested Hofbauer to undertake the religious instruction of the three daughters, who were of school-age; consequently Hofbauer became a frequent visitor here from 1810 until his death. Two of the children, Josepha and Rosalia, were still living when the Process for the Beatification of their former catechist was in

progress, and have left us some very interesting descriptions of his personality. They tell us that his first question on arriving at their house, was, "Well, Frau Bieringer, how are the children? Are they good?" Then, seating himself on the sofa, he used to tell the children, either during or after the instruction, some of his experiences. The picture he drew of the delights of Tivoli remained indelibly fixed in their minds. "Oh, my dears!" he would say, "if you only could realize the beauty of the surroundings and the blessed peace that reigns at Tivoli! I, for one, should like to die there; but that, of course, depends on God." Absorbed in such reminiscences as these, he would sometimes for fifteen minutes together hold unused between his fingers the pinch of snuff he had taken from his snuff-box. To such families, however, Hofbauer was more than a mere private instructor: he shared their joys and sorrows, was their chief adviser in all domestic affairs, and, as necessity demanded, even lent a helping hand. To Gussl, who for years suffered from consumption, he was a consoling angel. The Bieringer children were left motherless at an early age. Hofbauer provided some one to take over the care of the inn. Moreover, he sent them one of his penitents, the wife of a high official, who had no children of her own, to assume charge of the house. To the people of Vienna this woman was known only as "the kind woman at the Katz." Her husband was a confirmed Freemason, who clung to the principles of that secret sect in spite of her entreaties and admonitions. The temporary separation from his wife, to whom he was tenderly devoted, proved very beneficial to him. When Frederick Werner was preaching his wonderful sermons, this man came to a better mind, was converted, and sought out the preacher to make a general confession. He was afraid to appear before Hofbauer; but when shortly after this, he fell seriously ill, the Saint brought the wife to him and reconciled them. The Bieringers had in the meantime been blessed with a good step-mother, who, like her predecessor, was one of Hofbauer's sincerest admirers. The three von Maul sisters, who, the reader will remember, were the first to help him on the road to the priesthood, were also still living at this time, and frequently sat among his audience when he preached at St.

Ursula's. Hofbauer often visited them, and held them in high esteem as instruments employed by Divine Providence to bring him safely and at last to the realization of his vocation.

The most of Hofbauer's visits, however, were to the homes of the poor. "The rich," declares a certain witness at the Process of Beatification, "were obliged to seek him out; but he sought out the poor." Few particulars are preserved to us of the extent of his charities. What he must have been to the poor of Vienna became manifest only on the day of his funeral, when they came in throngs to pay their last tribute of respect to their deceased Father. Vast sums of money, distributed as alms, must have passed through his hands in the course of the years. He himself remarked that a strong man would not be able to carry all the gold that was given him for the poor. Charitable rich people were fond of making him the dispenser of their charities, nor did he hesitate to knock at the doors of the wealthy in behalf of the needy. His friends among the bakers of Vienna always kept him supplied with bread for the poor. At Széchényi's he was always permitted to take with him whatever was left over after the princely repast served in that home. The poor who were ashamed to have their want become known, shared his charity first and most; he himself would secretly bring the alms to their homes. Next to them those that oftenest experienced his tender, unselfish charity were the poor students, for whom he provided suitable lodgings, and the invalid soldiers, of whom there was a great number after the war.

His many walks in the city and to the suburbs, where the majority of his poor friends lived, must have made him a familiar figure to the Viennese. Although his Congregation was not authorized in Austria, and it was a strange sight to see any one in religious garb, he always appeared in public clad in the habit of the Redemptorists. The few Religious still abiding in the City, preferred to go abroad in civilian dress. Umbrellas and gloves he disdained as articles of luxury. In fact, as some one remarked, these things would have ill-accorded with the quality of his mantle, which was an old relic of Warsaw days. His broad-brimmed felt hat he wore only on stormy days; at other times he wore a cap made of cloth. Don

Caselli claimed that he did this out of reverence for the Presence of God. There was nothing spectacular about this custom of his, however, for it harmonized with his whole appearance. As he passed, thus attired, through the streets of the city, something awe-inspiring seemed to go forth from him. Timidly, or out of reverence, every one instinctively gave him the right of way. Now and then, it is true, some one did venture to insult him. Once, a gentleman, who was walking arm in arm with his lady, made some uncomplimentary remarks as he passed in front of the Saint. As the couple walked on ahead, the gentleman dropped his handkerchief. Hofbauer noticed it, picked it up, hurried after him, and with a disarming smile, called attention to his loss. It was a bitter mortification for the gentleman, and he was so bewildered that he could hardly stammer forth a few words of apology.

Notwithstanding the ceasless activity which so marked the last five or six years of his life, there was about Father Hofbauer no sign of that nervous haste which is usually so visible in those who are very much occupied. A certain witness declared that the impression one received on beholding him was that of a modest cheerfulness and a calm, peaceful serenity. "A pure, simple, steady spirit is not distracted by a multitude of affairs," we read in the Imitation of Christ; "because he does them all for the honor of God, and, at rest with himself, strives to be free from all self-seeking." (*Imitation of Christ,* I. iii., 3.)

6. *Hofbauer's Relations with the Protestants.* — How our Saint associated with educated Protestants may be learned from a letter of the well-known book-dealer, Frederick Perthes, who traveled through Southern Germany in the summer of 1816. In August of that year he was in Frankfort, where he met Schlegel, Schlosser, and Helfferich. These men drew his attention to Hofbauer, whom he later visited in Vienna. On August 18, he had a long interview with the Saint. On that same day Perthes wrote out a detailed account of this meeting for his wife. This account throws so much light on the character of Hofbauer that it may profitably be quoted here in full. "To-day toward noon, after several unsuccessful attempts, I

at last met Father Hofbauer. I found him in a spacious hall, poorly lighted due to the grating which guarded the windows. With him were a number of young men seated at their desks and engaged some in reading and some in writing.[9] During my visit I saw one of them go to the cupboard built against one of the pillars and help himself to a large butter-cake. Hofbauer sat with me in the middle of the hall. He has passed his seventieth year, but while short of stature is still well-built and vigorous. His eyes, lacking the upward slant usually seen in Catholic priests, are sharp, steady, and full of fire; his features are radiant with life and energy, and yet his whole countenance has about it a calm that is not of earth and can only be described as heavenly. With delicate tact Father Hofbauer opened the conversation by inquiring about several friends we have in common and about my own youth and studies, drifting quite naturally from Claudius to Frederick Leopold Stolberg and the latter's conversion to the Catholic faith. I must confess that he had soon completely won my heart. I spoke very frankly with him about Stolberg and his relations with Princess Gallitzin, whom I called my motherly friend. I said that, taking into consideration Stolberg's personal character, on the one hand, and the status, teachings, and activities of the Protestant church at the time, on the other, I regarded his conversion as both natural and imperative. But as I noticed from the impression these words made on him, that they were understood as referring directly to my own position, I immediately added, in order to show that I was upright and sincere with the venerable old man: 'Had I been born and brought up in the Catholic religion, I should now be and should remain a Catholic; and if I were now living in a country where there were no Protestant, but only Catholic Congregations, I should similarly, were I to remain in that country, become a Catholic; nay more: even in case the present trend of Protestant-Neological Theology were completely victorious and were accepted by all the Protestant

[9] This hall could not have been Hofbauer's room, as Haringer maintains. Perthes may have met Hofbauer at the Servites (perhaps in their refectory [?]), where the young men under the Saint's direction were perhaps just engaged in copying and translating reports from Frankfort, as Perthes' description above seems to indicate.

congregations, I should nevertheless follow Stolberg's example, in order to secure to my children the benefit of communion with Christians. But this event will never come to pass, and so far as concerns the salvation of my own soul, I do not feel the necessity of conversion at all, since I regard the confession of my sinfulness, the need and certainty of Redemption through Jesus Christ, faith and humility and intercourse with God as entirely independent of membership in the Catholic Church. The conversion of individual believing Christians from one creed to another, if there be no particular compelling reason for it, may be considered as a forestalling of the designs of the Lord, and as an impediment to the eventual reunion of all Christians in one flock. Were it not for this impediment, the forms of the Catholic Church system would long since have yielded a great deal to the pressure of modern sentiment, and the Protestants would already have accepted again much that they had rejected. Be that as it may, a reunion will and must inevitably be effected in the course of time.' — While I was speaking Hofbauer sat there looking calmly and intently at me, and when I had finished, he grasped my hand warmly and said: 'I, too, believe in an invisible Church. I shall pray for you that you may not enter into temptation. Let us now quietly continue our conversation, without permitting ourselves to be disturbed by the thoughts you have just expressed.' — Thereupon we began to talk about the Reformation, and Hofbauer said: 'Since I have had the opportunity as Papal Legate to compare the conditions of Catholics in Poland with those of Protestants in Germany, I have become convinced that the great apostasy from the Church took place because in Germany the people stood, as they now stand, in need of the uplifting power of religion. The Reformation was brought about and has been maintained, not so much by heretics and philosophers, as by the great body of the people earnestly seeking a religion that would satisfy the heart. I have told this to the Pope and to the Cardinals in Rome; but they would not believe me, and still held firmly to the idea that the Reformation was inspired by hatred toward religion.' — Hofbauer then made me tell him a great deal about religious and ecclesiastical conditions in Northern Germany. When I was

about to depart, the pious and meek old man cordially offered me his hand, and with a blessing dismissed me." [10]

Hofbauer, it is clear, did not treat with all Protestants in the same way, but suited his methods and tactics to their individual dispositions. In the present instance, in which he had before him a subjective conviction unmarred by the shadow of a doubt, he prudently turned the conversation away from the topic of religion, in order not to lead his guest into temptation by disturbing his evident good faith. Quite differently, however, did he act, for example, with the ladies in Pilat's house, who had learned to know Catholic life only too well, but were withheld from following the secret promptings of their heart by such foolish prejudices as what they termed the "adoration" of the Pope, and the "bass-fiddle-like form" of the Roman vestments. In such cases Hofbauer was wont to tell them very bluntly and sternly "to put off the black stockings." Whether one would call this manner of acting

[10] *Life of Frederick Perthes,* Vol. II. p. 124 — Hofbauer's remarks about the cause of the Reformation, as reported by Perthes, may at first sight strike the reader as very strange. But, according to all the rules of criticism, the explanation and meaning of these remarks depend upon the light in which Hofbauer viewed the character of the Reformation. That he considered it as a great misfortune for the Church and for the German people, is as clear and certain as is the frankness with which he expressed his opinion about it even to educated Protestants, and boldly told them "to cast aside the black stockings" of Protestantism. It cannot be conceived that he should have made an exception in favor of Perthes. If therefore Hofbauer's remarks on the cause of the Reformation, as given above, are in evident contradiction to his judgment on the character of the Reformation, we shall have to conclude that they were misunderstood by Perthes and incorrectly quoted by him in his report. That Hofbauer with his keen Catholic sense should not have become aware of such a contradiction, is inconceivable. Nor can I agree with Kralik when he says that the remarks in question are "a complete vindication of Luther and of the Germans that fell away with him." (*Das Neue Reich,* 1821, No. 41, p. 795) Kralik likewise rejects as critically untenable Hofbauer's remarks, handed down to us by Emmanuel Veith, that Rome was the cause of all the evil. This saying probably looks so offensive only because we do not know the connection in which it was uttered, and therefore do not understand its exact import. It is merely one of those epigrammatic expressions that must be taken with a grain of salt. The Saint, who was of an extremely choleric temperament, was fond of expressing his thoughts in such short, terse, emphatic phrases. Thus, for instance, he often made use of the well-known dictum, "*omne malum a clero,*" which means about the same thing. Compare the remarks of Philip Veit on this subject, "*Omne malum a clero.*" — "We priests are the cause of all evil," said Hofbauer to me. (Herman Cardauns, *Philip Veit and Ernest Lieber,* pp. 63, 69, and above, p. 399.)

"proselytizing," depends entirely upon the sense which one attaches to this word. "Proselytism" means to force upon another person one's own religious convictions without having a knowledge of that other's condition of soul, or without taking that condition into consideration. Hofbauer did no such thing; he first "proved the spirits" (1 John, iv. 1) that he endeavored to win back to the Church.

He made the return to the Church as easy as possible for his converts. Madame von Pilat, who contemplated with dread the thought of making her first confession, he cured in the following simple manner. One day he pictured to her in conversation the kind of life which women of her rank usually led. Suddenly he inquired whether she still had such a dread of confession. She replied in the affirmative. "But why?" continued the Saint; "you have already made your confession! You have not denied anything that I said, when I held up to you the mirror of your faults. Nothing more is necessary now than to complete your confession by my asking a few questions, giving you some salutary advice, and imparting the sacramental absolution."

In instructing prospective converts, Hofbauer did not insist upon their knowing, and therefore did not acquaint them with, all the details that belong to the whole body of the Catholic doctrine. He was satisfied if they learned the principal truths thoroughly, and he relied upon the workings of grace and the light of divine inspiration to supply the rest. How quickly he received certain individuals into the Church, when circumstances counseled against delay, may be seen from the story, related by Dr. Madlener, of the conversion of the two sons of Baron Rieger, a Calvinist official. Rieger had married the French lady Geramb, a Catholic, who was the sister of the renowned Trappist Father Geramb. Five children, four boys and a girl, were born of this union, but the Baron, contrary to the marriage agreement brought them up in the Calvinist religion. After the Baron's death, the three youngest children decided to become Catholics, and after being instructed by Father Sabelli, were received into the Church by Father Hofbauer. The two eldest sons, Adolph and Charles, remained Calvinists. Madlener was their private tutor in physics and

mathematics. Soon after this, Adolph contracted consumption, and when the physician declared that the youth had but a day more to live, Madlener hurried to the Saint with the distressing information. Hofbauer merely replied: "His salvation is on your conscience; tell him that he will die." Adolph had already heard much of Hofbauer, but as he could not believe his condition serious, did not heed his tutor's suggestion to invite Hofbauer to visit him. He promised to pay a personal visit to the Saint later on. At length Hofbauer yielded to Madlener's entreaties and went to see the sick man. "Oh, this is too much kindness," the latter remarked, when the Saint entered. "I love the sick," Hofbauer replied simply. "How are you feeling, my dear Baron?" — "Oh," rejoined Adolph, "how can a miserable man like me feel?" At this point Hofbauer requested to be left alone with the patient. Scarcely a quarter of an hour had elapsed, when he came out of the room and said: "The patient is already a Catholic. I am going now to bring him Holy Communion; prepare him meanwhile to receive his Lord." Madlener was so astounded that he forgot to comply with the Saint's orders. "I went in to the sick man," he continues, "and found his countenance radiant with joy; a great peace had descended upon him, and the expression of pain and dread had disappeared. I was unable to utter a word. The patient looked strangely at me, as if he longed to tell me all that had taken place in his heart." Four hours after Hofbauer had given him Holy Communion, Adolph expired. A few days later, his brother Charles came to Vienna, and visited Hofbauer to thank him for the kindness he had shown his brother. After an hour's conversation with the Saint, Charles, too, resolved to become a Catholic; and not many years passed before he entered the priesthood.

7. *Hofbauer's Relations with Men of Letters.* — Finally, as the confessor and counselor of the learned, of poets and other writers, Hofbauer exercised another special apostolate, which has been called his literary apostolate. In consequence of the peculiar conditions of the times, the Hofbauer Circle in Vienna became the focus of a powerful Catholic literary movement. Reference has already been made to the "Austrian Observer," edited by Pilat. Even if that paper could not be

considered a Catholic organ — something that Metternich would hardly have tolerated — still the contributions of Schlegel, Adam Mueller, Pilat, and Klinkowstroem, which appeared in its pages and breathed a thoroughly conservative and Christian spirit, should not be underestimated in their far-reaching effects. The Roman Curia repeatedly tendered Pilat a vote of thanks in recognition of his work. Adam Mueller edited his "Staats-Anzeiger" in the same spirit from 1815 to 1818. While Pilat and Mueller were earning their laurels as pioneers of a Catholic press, Schlegel devoted his time and energy to the founding of a Catholic periodical covering all departments of intellectual life. The fact that he never got beyond the attempt lessens neither the credit due him nor the significance of these first endeavors to oppose a Catholic bulwark of thought and learning to the French Encyclopedia, and to Nicolai's German organ of the "Illuminati," which made its appearance about the same time. The "German Museum," founded, in 1812, as an aid to the study and development of History, Philosophy, Literature, and Art, lasted no longer than the following year. Nevertheless, in spite of its brief existence, it helped the Romanticist tendency in Austria to victory. In the year of Hofbauer's death, Schlegel made a second attempt to get Catholic thought and sentiment before the public, by publishing the "Concordia." The advance notice of the forthcoming appearance of this periodical is worthy of attention: "A new periodical," it read, "devoted to science, history, and literature, and in which the entire domain of higher culture is considered and treated from a Catholic point of view, and made expressly to reflect this view-point, is a necessity in these our times." The Catholic element was also well represented in the "Wiener Jahrbuecher der Literatur," of which Pilat was the associate-editor. When Collin retired after acting for a short time as editor-in-chief, Francis von Bucholtz, the historian of the Hofbauer Circle and likewise a friend of our Saint, took over the management of this valued periodical. No one will be much surprised at hearing that light literature was little in harmony with the personal tastes of the Saint. We have already learned from Mary Rizy what he thought of the reading of novels and other fictitious

works. Still he was by no means one-sided or narrow-minded in this matter; he understood the needs of others. He frequently spoke of the insatiable thirst for reading then existing among the people of Germany, and of the necessity of providing for it. The only literary undertaking which unquestionably owed its inception to his suggestion, was really a family journal. This was "Die Oelzweige," founded by his disciple and friend, George Passy, in 1819. This popular journal contained, besides ascetical articles, also stories, songs, poems, and dramatical sketches.[11] Dr. Veith published the Almanac of the Muses called "Balsaminen," and Frederick von Klinkowstroem provided wholesome amusement and entertainment for the young by means of the "Wiener Sonntagsblaetter," illustrated in masterly fashion by his own pen. This was, perhaps, the first illustrated Catholic newspaper in Germany.[12] Religious literature, however, was more in accord with the tastes of our Saint. The preparation of new editions and translations of sound ascetical writings had years ago occupied a conspicuous place in the program of the work he had mapped out for his Fathers at St. Benno's. In Vienna Hofbauer kept his friends and disciples at the same kind of work. One need here recall only the names of Passy and Silbert, who did much in their day to supply the German book-market with good ascetical literature. But it was Hofbauer's most intimate friend and confessor, Dr. Francis Schmid, that displayed the most untiring zeal as an ascetical writer. Prevented from exercising the ministry of preaching by reason of weak lungs, this zealous priest had recourse to the pen

[11] The impression which "Die Oelzweige" produced in the opposing camp may be learned from an article in the *Muenchener Allgemeinen Literaturzeitung,* (1820, February, No. 9, p. 69), which reads in part as follows: "The olive-branches of mysticism which certain individuals have attempted to transplant to our genial and jovial Austria, and which even now are expected to bear true, mystic fruits, because one of the first laborers in the mystical vineyard of Germany has ingrafted them, are destined to wither away before they begin to bud. Sound common sense is no mare that you can drive to death. . . ." This prophecy, sad to say, was soon verified, but of course for reasons quite different from those here assigned. So great was the demand for "Die Oelzweige," that the editions of the four years had to be reprinted. Why it went under in spite of this popularity, only a few years after Hofbauer's death, cannot be clearly ascertained.

[12] *Stimmen aus Maria Laach,* XV (1878, p. 97).

to carry the message of the Gospel before the world. He entered upon this field of activity during the period of which we are now treating, soon after he had been appointed curate at St. Stephen's, in 1809; and he continued to labor incessantly in this wise until his death in 1843. In the course of these years he wrote a great number of prayer-books and devotional works in German, Latin, Italian, French, English, and Greek. And his writings were addressed to the needs of nearly every class of people — the clergy, students, civilians, soldiers, servants, apprentices, and laborers. For the Jews he had the Messianic prophecies printed in the original text. As he was not dependent for his support upon the income derived from his books, which for the most part appeared without his name, he gave them away as presents, at times disposing of entire editions in this manner. The Greek prayer-book was forwarded to Greece; the English one to America; the Book for the Sick was furnished to the hospitals in Vienna, and copies of the Book for the Soldiers were distributed among those in the military service. Before beginning a new book, the pious author sought light and help in prayer; and during the composition of each work, he made three pilgrimages to churches in the suburbs — on beginning the book, when it was half-written, and on its completion. Hofbauer valued the work of this quiet, gentle priest very highly. "If Vienna only had three Schmids," he would say, "nothing more would be needed to convert the whole city."

The circulating library, an enterprise set on foot probably by Diesbach and Penckler, was the chief means of spreading wholesome reading-matter among the people of Vienna. George Passy seems to have conducted this circulating library of spiritual books in Dorothy Street. The subscribers to this library received "Die Oelzweige" gratis.[13]

It is quite true, therefore, that "also in Austria the refreshing spring air of Eastertide was being wafted across the fields of Catholic literature," bearing with it a promise of resurrection. What credit is due to our Saint for this reflowering of

[13] "Die Oelzweige" frequently advertised the works of this library. One of the notices often appearing in its pages announced that the library was open from 9 to 1, and from 3 to 6 o'clock.

Catholic thought and literary endeavor, must be rightly understood, before it can be properly weighed. It cannot be claimed that he gave impulse or encouragement to this movement by personally engaging in scientific or literary pursuits, or even by offering assistance of a strictly scientific or literary nature; for, what had this simple priest, unskilled in literature and worldly science, to tender such highly gifted friends as Schlegel and Mueller, when they fared forth into their own professional fields? It is all the more remarkable, then, that in spite of this, these very men always insisted on submitting the products of their genius to their spiritual Father, and so faithfully sought his approval of their work. Frederick von Schlosser knew of no more pleasing Easter-gift to send his saintly friend than his most recent translations of Latin hymns. Schlegel read his writings to Hofbauer, and Werner his verses, though it must be admitted that the Saint, perhaps to humble Werner, was not at times too complimentary in expressing his opinion of the latter's poetic effusions. But when the domain of religion was touched upon, Hofbauer was in his element, were the field of the natural science discussed ever so remote or strange to him. Dr. Emmanuel Veith ably characterizes him in this respect, when he says: "In matters pertaining to literature, poetry, learned hypotheses, dogmatical speculations, or mystical teachings, his judgment was remarkably swift and accurate. One could see that he compared these actual or presumed findings of natural science with the knowledge he had acquired in a supernatural manner. This I can prove from certain expressions to which he sometimes almost inadvertently gave utterance, pointing meanwhile with his finger toward heaven. As he sat there quietly listening to the reading of some book or article, one could frequently read his opinion in the lines of his countenance. If any passage did not meet with his approval, his features would take on a pained, satirical expression, too evident to be missed, and yet too kindly to give offense."

But we must admit, in general, that the essence of our Saint's literary apostolate lay in his personal care for the souls of those devoted to literary pursuits. This was but another phase of his pastoral labors. He led artists and men of

letters to pray, and in doing so he brought science and art into the service of God and made them once again the handmaidens of religion. He watered the roots from the fountains of religion; the leaves thenceforth sprouted forth of themselves. In this way he influenced the intellectual life of his times more powerfully and more permanently than he could have done by any literary or scientific contribution of his own; for, as a certain writer says " it is not Romanticism, but sermons spoken by the lips, and the sacraments administered by the hands, of zealous priests, that have revived poetry and made it Catholic." (*Macke-Norrenberg*).

8. *Hofbauer as Spiritual Director of the Ursulines.* — Of Hofbauer's activities as Spiritual Director of the Ursulines, two of these nuns, who were guided by him in the paths of the religious life, have left us a minute description in the Process of his Beatification. These were the choir-nun Jacoba von Welschenau, who joined the Ursulines in 1813, and the lay-sister Thaddea Taxboeck, who entered the convent in 1814. Among all the members of this community, the latter was without doubt the Saint's most docile penitent, and enjoyed his special confidence; to her we are indebted for much valuable information concerning his life and personal traits of character.

Had he wished, the Saint could have made his duties as Spiritual Director of Ursulines very light and easy for himself. Besides being required to hear the confessions of the nuns once a week, the office imposed upon him no other burden of any moment. No one could have taken it amiss, if, in view of his other labors and duties, he had confined his services at the convent to what was strictly expected of him. But Hofbauer regarded his position here in quite a different light. He bestowed upon the convent so great an attention that he seemed to live only for his work there and to have no other cares to engage him. We shall quote only a few passages from the depositions of the witnesses.

On account of the unfavorable conditions of the times, the Ursuline Convent suffered severely in a material sense. Heavily in debt at Hofbauer's first coming to minister to their spiritual needs, the financial embarrassment and domestic dif-

ficulties of the nuns were heightened by the woful decline in money-values and the exorbitant prices of food-stuffs during the years 1816 and 1817. When Sister Taxboeck was about to be invested with the religious habit, the Superioress did not have enough money to buy her a new pair of shoes, such as were worn in the convent. During the Retreat the Saint summoned the candidate-sister and handed her a new pair of shoes. "Try them on," he said to her, "and see if they will fit; if they do not, I shall buy you another pair." They fitted to perfection, and rendered service for thirty-four years; for, out of reverence for the saintly donor, they were worn only on great feast-days.

During the year 1817, when prices were so prohibitive, the dealers and merchants of the city refused to deliver to the convent, which was deeply in debt, even the necessaries of life. Hofbauer became aware of this sad state of affairs quite accidentally: one of the novices came to him and accused herself of having taken a crust of bread without permission, in order to satisfy her hunger. Moved with pity, the Saint decided that it was his duty to intervene in behalf of the suffering community. He provided help in several ways. One day he placed a roll of gold on the table before the Superioress, and remarked with a smile: "I am the dumb fish." The previous day when the nuns were commenting on that part of the Gospel where St. Matthew records that St. Peter found the tribute money in the mouth of the fish, one of them averred that they too were in dire need of catching a dumb fish with a coin in its mouth. (Matth. xvii. 26.) On another occasion the Saint himself dragged a sack of winter barley through the streets of the city to the convent. Once he appeared at the convent with a lamb. All these years the nuns had gleaned a modest profit by preparing and selling a certain extract of balsam. One day the Saint came to them with an improved recipe, by means of which this extract became a source of increased income. He finally succeeded in freeing the convent entirely from debt. In 1819, the nuns were honored by a personal visit from Cardinal von Olmuetz. While His Eminence was in the refectory with the whole community, Hofbauer appeared on the scene. The Cardinal complimented him,

remarking that the joy of the Holy Ghost shone forth in the countenances of the nuns and their spiritual director. "And yet," came the quick rejoinder, "we are groaning under the burden of a debt that is crushing us to the ground. In fact, this convent is on the point of dissolution, unless some one soon comes to our assistance." As a result of this casual meeting between the Prelate and the Saint, the debt resting on the convent was paid by the Court itself.

When we consider how seriously he regarded his office as Confessor of the Ursulines, and how conscientiously he discharged the duties it entailed, the hearing of the nuns' confessions proved no slight task for Father Hofbauer. Philip Veit once met him completely exhausted. Asked where he had been, the Saint replied: "I have been hearing confessions at a convent of nuns." Congratulated upon his appointment as spiritual director at St. Ursula's, he said: "You congratulate me, and yet I am full of fear; for I would rather hear the confessions of half the Austrian army than those of ten lukewarm nuns."

The nuns under his direction considered him a severe rather than a lenient spiritual master. Not the discipline of the convent, but the spirit of its members had suffered during the disorders following in the wake of Josephism. It has been intimated that some of the religious did not respond to his efforts to revive in the community the fervor of former days and to bring the observance of the rules nearer to perfection. This may have been true in a few exceptional cases. By the great majority he was very much appreciated, and in general met with a ready response. The witnesses state emphatically that he took a firm stand particularly against sensitiveness and tale-bearing, and strove incessantly to instil into the nuns a high esteem for their vocation. His solicitude was not confined to a general supervision and interest; knowing no bounds, it extended to each individual of the community. The bodily health as well as the spiritual progress of each was a matter of deep concern to him, although he opposed with all his heart and soul every tendency toward fastidiousness. One day the Novice-Sister Jacoba had a fainting-spell as she was coming down the stairs on her way to confession. After her confes-

sion Hofbauer said to her: "Well, that is the way with women; they are forever complaining or crying about something." Nevertheless he seriously remonstrated with the Novice-Mistress, and warned her that she must spare the health of this novice as much as possible.

Those nuns who chanced to be ill in the infirmary received a daily visit from him. An aged Sister who was constantly suffering, but hard to manage, was the object of his kindliest interest and attention. Before visiting the infirmary, he would go into the garden and pluck a few flowers, or he would look about for some other trifle, to cheer up the poor creature. One day he made her quite happy by leading her by the arm and taking her for a short walk along the corridor. Thereafter, whenever she showed signs of ill-humor, all that was necessary to restore her cheerfulness and calm her ruffled spirits was to remind her of that privileged promenade with Father Hofbauer. If one of the nuns lay in her death-agony, his time was given exclusively to her; and he would then spend the night at the convent, so that the patient might receive Holy Communion immediately after midnight.[14] When he was thus engaged with the care of the sick or dying, the other nuns were obliged to repair to the infirmary-chapel to make their weekly confession. At the bedside of a dying nun he seemed as if transfigured. The religious kneeling about were deeply affected by his rapt appearance on such occasions, for standing there, erect and solemnly reciting the prayers for the dying, his eyes fairly sparkled with a light that was not of this earth, but rather a reflex of that blessed Vision toward which the departing soul was hastening.

His visits to the convent, however, were not inspired merely by duty. The nuns cared for the altar linens used at the Italian Church, and he would at times call on those engaged in this labor of love, congratulate them on being selected to perform so holy a work, exhort them to acquit themselves of it well, and as a reward would grant them permission for an extra Holy Communion. Sister Thaddea declares that the

[14] The chronicles of St. Ursula's has the following entry: "1819. Our Mother Paula died on Jan. 23 at 5:15 A.M., in the forty-fifth year of her life. The Rev. Confessor assisted at her death. He remained at the convent for three nights."

lay-sisters enjoyed his special affection. At his request the Archbishop allowed them to receive Holy Communion three times a week, like the choir-nuns, for until his advent to the convent they were permitted to receive only twice. On days of recreation he occasionally shared with the nuns the refreshments served in the refectory; and at these familiar gatherings he would sometimes even drink coffee, which as a guest at the tables of the rich and great he invariably declined. On these occasions, too, he was fond of relating in his friendly, affable way, some of his experiences — his labors out in the great city, his joys in the sacred ministry, his struggles at a deathbed to win a soul for Christ; or he would recount certain particularly interesting events in Church History. He spoke with predilection about those heroic men and women who had suffered much for the Church. Nor did he, during these intimate conversations, frown upon an innocent joke. Sister Thaddea tells us that he once jestingly remarked to the lay-sister Sebastiana, whom he held in high esteem for her saintly life, that she was already a saint. Thereupon the good Sister, her humility wounded, turned upon him, declaring that while she was nothing but a miserable worm, he himself was indeed a great saint. She then launched forth into an eloquent panegyric of the Saint, rehearsing for the edification of her Sisters in religion, all the good that she knew of him: with an elegant flow of language she told them how he took the poor under the wing of his charity, how he visited and cared for the sick, how fervently he assisted the dying, and so on. Hofbauer listened in silence to the eloquent speech, and when the good Sister had finished, he said naïvely to the bystanders: "That time I got it with a vengeance!" "Well, some day, Sister, I shall push you, too, into heaven," he promised his panegyrist. Sister Sebastiana declared that she would take him at his word; and indeed, as Sister Thaddea adds, when Sister Sebastiana lay at the point of death, she twice distinctly pronounced the name of Father Hofbauer.

Finally, it is worthy of special remark that as Spiritual Director at St. Ursula's, Hofbauer granted the nuns the greatest liberty and latitude in choosing their confessor. Sister Thaddea relates that the thought of giving up her former

confessor, the Servite Father Maximus, almost kept her from entering the convent. But the Superioress wrote to her that she might come with a free mind about that matter, since the nuns now had a very saintly confessor, who cared for the body and soul of the Sisters with the solicitude of a father and mother; he left them, she said, every liberty of spirit, and had repeatedly invited a number of good priests to the convent to hear the confessions of the nuns.

9. *Hofbauer as Superior.* — Those, however, whose spiritual welfare was nearest to his heart, and for whom he felt most responsible, were his own confrères. It will not be necessary to enter here upon many further details. In the course of this narrative we have had many occasions to admire his tender love for his brethren. But this love was a strong, well-regulated love. In a certain sense he may be characterized as a strict Superior; but that he did not cling obstinately and inexorably to the letter of the Rule, and knew, when occasion required, how to adapt the Rule liberally to circumstances, we have likewise had ample occasion to learn. He was not inclined to be indulgent, however, in matters pertaining to the maintenance of religious discipline, and when there was question of serious infringements, he could be decidedly firm. In the matter of religious poverty he made no allowance, even in the most trifling prescriptions of the Rule. Thus, he persistently refused to accept a silk scarf which Madame Bieringer offered him as a protection against colds, because the Rule forbade the use of silk. Father Stark once failed against this rule by wearing a silk binding on his mantle, and accordingly was punished in a manner that must have caused him not a little pain. During a visit to the Bieringers, when Stark was with him, Hofbauer suddenly asked those present if they wished to meet a Redemptorist who did not keep his Rule. Waiting for no reply, he pointed to the forbidden silk on Father Stark's mantle; and without more ado he dismissed the delinquent with the words: "Son, now you may go!" It was a source of great edification to all the family to see the disciple prove himself worthy of his saintly master by withdrawing without the least sign of embarrassment or resentment. In like manner he corrected and punished lack of

promptness in obedience. Whilst he was still at Babenhausen, he took Father Passerat, the Rector of the community, severely to task, for coming late to dinner in consequence of having tarried in the confessional beyond the appointed time. As a penance the Rector was obliged to take his meal seated on the floor of the refectory.

The Saint had no difficulty in calmly overlooking even the most outrageous insults to himself; but it cost him no little effort to restrain his indignation when persons consecrated to God, and particularly those in authority, failed in any way. A certain excess of holy indignation is a fault which even souls otherwise perfect — souls entirely detached from everything earthly — still very easily commit, especially if, like our Saint, they possess a fiery temperament and a strong will. No one was more conscious of this weakness of his than Hofbauer himself. Sorrow and humiliation followed immediately in the wake of haste, whenever he had been betrayed into any such manifestation of temper. With a painful glance to heaven, he would then strike his breast and say: "*Homo nequam sum!* — I am a wicked wretch!"

Moreover, no one can deny that not he himself alone, but his subjects as well had at times to suffer on account of his violent temper. The flight of Brother Emmanuel from St. Benno's occasioned by the Vicar-General's haste and quickness to anger, and the complaints of Father Vannelet rising from the selfsame source, have been referred to in our narrative, and are here recalled as striking examples in point. And that the Saint had to battle against this weakness of character until his death, is proved by the following incident which he himself related with all its details to an intimate friend. One day Sabelli and Stark in some way caused him grievous displeasure. He became so vexed at the occurrence that he flared up with anger and told them that they might henceforth do as they pleased, since he would remain with them no longer, but would set out for America. Suiting the action to the word, he took a bundle of linen from his trunk and left the house. The two young Fathers were dumbfounded and did not know what to think or do. Hofbauer went to the Church of "Maria-Hilf," which he was in the habit of visiting every week. In

the mental repose and serenity which prayer before the tabernacle restored to his ruffled spirits, he realized his mistake, and was seized with deep regret for what had happened. The impulse of the moment urged him to return home at once, but second thought showed him that this course would be incompatible with his office as Superior. He saw but one way out of the awkward position into which his hasty temper had thrust him, and that was to wait for the two Fathers to come to him and beg him to return. Long and fervently he prayed to the Blessed Virgin, beseeching her to inspire Sabelli and Stark to adopt such a course. But the two Fathers did not come; and so, with a heavy heart, he rose from his knees at last, left the church, and quitting Vienna, bent his slow and faltering steps in the direction of Upper Austria, praying continually as he went. He had already covered much ground, when his heart gave a leap of joy: he heard footsteps and heavy panting behind him. It was the two Fathers who ran after him, begging his pardon and entreating him to return. Never, perhaps, did Hofbauer grant a request more readily than this one. After relating this incident, he added: "Alas! this is my weakness; still I thank God for it, since without this to remind me of my frailty, I might feel tempted to kiss my own hand out of respect for myself."

Father Srna, who was with Father Hofbauer as a postulant from 1815 to 1818, relates an incident which shows how absolutely his conduct and enactments as Superior were stripped of all malevolence and personal animus, even when he administered a correction. One day, after being reprimanded by Hofbauer, Srna got out of humor and retired to his room. Shortly afterward the Saint came to him with a sheet of music, and inquired, as if nothing had happened: "Do you know this song? Come, let us sing it together!" And so, the two sang in unison; and the sunlight pushed through the clouds, the gloom lifted, and everything glided back naturally into pleasant unrestraint.

It is no surprise, then, to learn that the Vicar-General was not only universally esteemed, but as a rule even loved by his subjects. Many of them clung to him with an almost extravagant affection. A number of their letters that have been

preserved to us, breathe a tender attachment to him, and an ardent longing to be able once more to see and embrace their Father, at the time so far away.

In some cases, however, actual and painful experience brought home to the Saint the truth of our Saviour's words: "A man's enemies shall be they of his own household" (Matth. x. 36). Indeed, this prediction is but too often verified in the lives of saintly Religious. Usually the most heart-piercing annoyances met with in the religious state come from one's own confrères. This is due principally to natural causes; and it would be an error to ascribe these annoyances, always and off-hand, to a wanton persecution of the Saint. On account of the intimate and constant contact of community life, even the slightest differences of character make themselves felt in a disturbing manner. And who will deny that certain discordant elements were to be found even in our Saint's character? Werner once wrote in a letter to a lady: "Hofbauer at times evinces traits of character which would undoubtedly frighten away any one that did not thoroughly understand them."[15] Those imperfections which are inseparable from human nature are indeed compatible with heroic sanctity; nevertheless, they may easily lead weaker and less fervent brethren to overlook entirely in those whose characters are thus blemished the brilliant luster of extraordinary virtue — so great is the blinding power of self-love! And if, in addition, the saintly person be set in the high place of authority, as was the case with Hofbauer throughout his religious life, it becomes inevitable that he should at times find an opponent among the confrères committed to his care. Our Saint found his opponent in Father Sabelli. This clever, talented young priest rendered Hofbauer valuable services as his secretary; but he had little sympathy with the Vicar-General, and made no secret of it even in the presence of others, so that his disapproval frequently amounted to downright disrespect. The source of this natural antipathy may, perhaps, have been traceable to his character: Sabelli is described by those who subsequently became his Superiors, as a very reserved character. Moreover, he had an unmistakable leaning toward the pseudo-

[15] Floeck, II. p. 349.

mystic tendencies of the times, for which Hofbauer entertained a pronounced disgust. Sabelli thought it not amiss, even to interfere with the Saint's spiritual direction of individual nuns. In a word, he caused the Saint many a sad hour. Still, we need not wonder at this. It seems to be part of the designs of Providence not to spare chosen souls this most painful sort of trial — to be misjudged and accordingly opposed by those of their own household. The author of a Mystical Theology even goes so far as to assert, that rather than permit one soul called to higher perfection to escape such contradictions, God would blind to that soul's spiritual beauty the eyes of a thousand other saints, so as to purify yet more that one vessel of election by the harsh but unjust judgments with which in their ignorance they would visit it.

10. Is there in the life of Hofbauer any evidence that he possessed and exercised miraculous power? From certain passages in this biography,[16] it is clear that God had not denied him this gift; in general, however, it seems not to have occupied in his life the important rôle that it played in the careers of other Saints. The Spirit of God breatheth where He will, and the marvelous does not necessarily belong to the essence of sanctity. Still, this gift, the testimony of reliable witnesses assures us, was not entirely lacking in him. These witnesses furnish sufficient proof, for instance, that a glance into the future was repeatedly vouchsafed him, and that a carefully guarded secret was frequently manifested to him. At times, it is true, it is difficult to determine, whether his predictions of future events sprang from higher light, or from his exceptional knowledge of men and his clear-sighted discerning powers. Certain of his predictions, however, had no link whatever with those natural causes by which wise and observant minds are able at times to surmise and forecast coming events. The case of the Novice-Sister Jacoba von Welschenau at St. Ursula's may serve as an example. This good Sister was in constant dread lest, in consequence of her continued ill-health, she should be dismissed as useless. Hofbauer allayed her fears: he told her positively that she would make her religious profession, get well, and outlive many who

[16] See above, pp. 244, 319, 428, 455.

were healthier and stronger than she. Shortly before the date set for her profession, she fell ill again, and she once more made known her fears to the Saint; nor were her apprehensions at this time entirely groundless, for her Superioress was in fact on the point of dismissing her. But Hofbauer reassured her, and declared: "You will make your profession, and when you have reached your twenty-eighth year you will get well, and you will live to be a very old woman." Upon this advice, the novice was admitted to the vows of religion. Sister Jacoba was one of the three Ursulines of Hofbauer's time that lived to see the Process of his Beatification and to bear witness to the sanctity of his life.

On the occasion of this prophecy, and indeed whenever he gave utterance to predictions of this kind, it was easy to perceive that something extraordinary was passing in the soul of the Saint: he became embarrassed, and immediately tried to dispel the impression he had made, by saying or doing something droll or ludicrous. Now he would turn briskly upon his heel, and now stoop down and pick a few loose threads from his cassock, saying, "A fine Vicar-General indeed!"

Moreover, it was generally claimed by his disciples that the food was multiplied in his hands; and a number of witnesses describe in detail what they saw happening while he was distributing food. But others who were likewise frequently in his company, seem not to have noticed any marvel of this sort, and Dr. Veith positively denies that anything of the kind ever occurred.[17] Be that as it may, this same Dr. Veith, who, on his own admission, was very much inclined to be skeptical even after his conversion, had two experiences for which he did not venture to give a natural explanation. The first of these had to do with the medical student, Thomas Lederer, referred to above, after he had lapsed back into Protestantism. It happened in November, 1819. Lederer was remaining over night at Dr. Veith's. "About eleven o'clock or toward midnight," Dr. Veith relates, "Lederer in a very loud voice was flaunting his admiration for Homer and the whole of heathenism, supplementing these utterances with

[17] Brunner, *Hofbauer*, p. 273.

an account of the brave deeds he had performed that day, such as seizing by the collar and flinging into a doorway a big fellow who had dared insult him in the street. Hardly had he finished the tale of his superior prowess, when the room resounded with a great noise. Near him in a corner, leaning against the wall, stood a large piece of cardboard, the surface of which was beaten with much force, as if with two drumsticks. Thrice in succession the sound was repeated like the roll of a large kettle-drum. I remained quiet, but the young man sprang to his feet at once, and lifting the cardboard aside looked to see what was behind it that might have produced the noise. As he found nothing, he, too, became silent and serious, and seemed to have understood the warning. The reason that leads me to connect this occurrence, which will admit of no natural explanation, with the prayer of Father Hofbauer as its cause, is the fact that the servant of God frequently expressed his deep sorrow over the apostasy of this young man. But I told him nothing of this strange happening. We could discover no one in the room in the second story or in any other part of the house."

The second case related by Dr. Veith occurred shortly after this at Klinkowstroem's. One day when he came on a visit to the "Scheiblauer House," Dr. Veith found the whole family prostrate with sorrow. The young son, Alphonsus, had been taken seriously ill. The child, then about a year old, was cold and pallid, its eyes seemed broken, and it lay stretched across the mother's lap so that its head and feet hung down limp. "Gazing at the little sufferer, my own personal conviction was that the child would not live until evening. Unexpectedly, though he knew of the family's trouble, Hofbauer came in. In tears the mother flew to meet him. 'It is nothing,' he assured her, 'it is nothing. This evening the child will be hungry and will eat something.' With these words he patted the child gently on the cheek, turned about on his heel as he was wont to do on such occasions, and began to talk about other matters. His prediction was fulfilled to the very letter." It must have been on this or a similar occasion that he said to Madame von Klinkowstroem: "You will lose none of your children by death." And the truth of these words became

evident but too soon; for the good woman departed this life as early as March, 1821, before any of her children.

Whether Hofbauer wrought miracles during his lifetime, a certain witness at the Process of Beatification, declared he could not tell; but he did unhesitatingly consider it a miracle, and a great miracle, that this humble priest could with the simplest of means achieve results so extraordinary. His contemporaries could not comprehend how others could effect nothing though using the selfsame words that on his lips produced so wonderful a change of mind in his hearers. One day he led a neglected child from the street to St. Anne's School and entrusted it to the care of one of the teachers. While conversing with the latter, the Angelus-bell rang. The young preceptor, with a sorry attempt at smartness, remarked that the bell was ringing for dinner, but he quickly perceived that his flippancy had deeply offended the priest. In serious tones Hofbauer reminded him of the sacred significance of the Angelus-bell. The effect of such a sermon at a time so unusual could have been foreseen in every other case; but in the present instance its effect was quite the reverse. The teacher gave up his profession and became a religious.

Frequently by a mere glance our Saint accomplished the most astounding results. A dissolute young man once forced his way up to the very front of the crowded church of St. Ursula, with the frivolous intent of observing the ladies present from a better vantage-ground. Just then Hofbauer, with head bowed and eyes cast down, approached, carrying the Blessed Sacrament in procession from the side-altar to the high-altar. As he passed near the young man, he slowly raised his head and fixed upon the offender a glance of reproach that was overpowering in its effect. It was a glance like that which the Saviour turned upon Peter in the court-yard of the High Priest: "And he went out and wept bitterly." At that solemn moment the young man laid aside every vestige of levity. These instances, which might be multiplied, plainly reveal the remarkable suggestive power which our Saint must have possessed. Not without good reason was it said of him: "He had only to look at people to make them believe."[18] Of course,

[18] H. Bahr, *Rudigier*, p. 19.

there is question here, primarily, of a purely natural gift, such as is often found in individuals of extraordinary mentality. It was in this sense, probably, that Werner compared Hofbauer with Napoleon and Goethe, and designated these men as the three greatest characters of their times. This gift of influencing the minds of others can be turned to evil as well as good use. With our Saint it formed only the basis of an extraordinary, supernatural life of grace. The life of grace has its special peculiarities and manifests itself differently in each Saint. In Hofbauer its characteristic feature stands out with singular definiteness: it manifested itself by means of a certainty of conviction which amounted almost to direct vision. He was, in one word, a hero of faith. As such he often represented himself in the most striking terms. He had many faults, he was accustomed to say, but God had granted him a faith that he would not exchange with any other person in the world. It was this vivid, soul-mastering faith that made of him "the apostle of his times." The Apostolate, in the strict, classical sense of the term, died with the last of the Apostles chosen by Christ. The Apostles announced the Saviour to the world as personal witnesses who had heard and seen the things they preached; and it was this feature that conferred upon their testimony that higher authority which constitutes the Apostleship. It is, however, more than an honorary title that men like Hofbauer receive when they are called Apostles. Such men enjoyed an extraordinary guidance or leading by grace, which awakened in them a conviction of faith of such rare freshness and directness as to be truly apostolic in its power and certainty. A contemporary knew not how better to describe our Saint than in the words: "That which we have seen and have heard, and our hands have handled, we declare unto you." When we say that Hofbauer was an "apostolic" man, we have, in this single word, not merely expressed his individuality, but explained the source of his power and revealed the profound mystery of his success.

It was precisely his hidden and seemingly insignificant labors for individual souls that gained for Hofbauer the title of Apostle of Vienna. No statistical tables, it is true, record for us how many individual persons and entire families he led

back permanently to the Catholic faith. Any attempt to make out such a record would be foredoomed to failure. The number of his converts can hardly be overestimated. The number of those who came into direct contact with him must have been very great indeed, but the extent of his influence was not limited to such as these. As in Warsaw and Suabia, so in Vienna, a mighty and momentous spiritual movement received its first impulse from him, gathered strength as it went forth from him, and spread ever farther and farther. "Through students he converted other students," writes a contemporary: "through workmen he attracted still other workmen to himself, through officials other officials, through children their parents, through the women the men; and thus he eventually converted entire families — always, however, proceeding slowly and quietly." He awakened a new life of faith in families and individuals, even before he ever came in contact with them. Now it is a domestic, now a private tutor numbered among his disciples, through whose means he injects a fresh, revivifying spirit into some family. The Countess Cecilia Gilleis, for example, declares, that Hofbauer first led her governess, Mary Rizy, to God, "and from that time, we also were led, one by one, back to a life of fervor." Cecilia Gilleis later became a Sister of Charity. Mary Rizy, then, did not after all labor in vain, as she feared she should be doing by retaining her position as governess. The same Countess assures us that through our Saint a new spirit found its way into the homes of many of the great families. He, in his prudence, understood so well how to make use of every little opportunity. Thus, he once entered into a conversation with a lad in the street, and incidentally instructed him in regard to the precept of fast and abstinence. As a consequence the boy stirred up a great storm at home when he refused to eat meat on Fridays, and appealed to Hofbauer's words in justification of his refusal. Soon after the boy's father — none other than Baron von Brenner — felt his conscience smitten, and himself sought out Father Hofbauer; and thenceforth there reigned again in the family of the Baron that Catholic spirit for which his house had always been distinguished.

Hofbauer's activity had another quality — it was neither superficial nor shallow: it was thorough. What he called forth was not a religious enthusiasm which quickly grew into a mighty wave. His whole personality was unequal and unfitted to producing such spontaneous response. He created no excitement whatever. In the written memoirs of those days, one misses his name even where one would expect to find it blazoned in bold letters. The world at large took little notice of him. He was too utterly poor in the things that attract and compel attention. But his intimate and ever-increasing spiritual family was safely and permanently set upon goodly pastures for life. A brief interview with him often sufficed to produce these abiding results. At the Process of the Beatification of Hofbauer, Canon Charles Welsersheimb proclaimed him the father of his spiritual life, and yet he had conversed with Hofbauer only once or twice at his home, and scarcely oftener in the street.

The steady, aspiring flame of Catholic fervor which the Saint had rekindled was not extinguished when the lamp of his mortal life was quenched: it endured from generation to generation, fed by the oil of faith and zeal which he had poured into the hearts of his disciples, and which they in turn poured into the souls of their own followers. It was not mere chance that awakened in the families of his friends and penitents so strong and evident a tendency to enter the Sacred Priesthood and to follow the counsels of the Religious Life. His influence, it is true, was circumscribed: it had its limits. There were many who would not permit themselves to be influenced by him. Grillparzer, for example, who was a most pronounced Josephist, succeeded in steeling himself against the appeal of this Catholic movement, although he was by no means ignorant of its existence. He had been made fully aware of it through his niece, Mary Rizy, as the poems he addressed to her amply prove. But Hofbauer had no need of the services of such men: those that were trained in the school of our Saint were not only sufficiently numerous, but sufficiently capable of perpetuating his work after his death. They were, in fact, Catholics, not merely in name, but in deed and in truth — men and women of lively faith, firm in their convictions, and

ready for any sacrifice. The first and most necessary steps of an onward, efficient Catholic movement were thus taken.

All true reformation in the Church must necessarily begin with the spiritual reawakening of the individual, which, in turn, owes its inspiration to the spiritual care bestowed upon the individual soul; and it is equally true that ecclesiastical reforms, to be effective, must be sustained and strengthened in that same arena of the individual's soul. The Apostle of Vienna accomplished this preliminary work, for the most part, during the quiet, but exceedingly busy and laborious evening of his life. That the full extent of his apostolate would appear only in the future, his more far-seeing friends, like Frederick Schlegel, even then clearly realized and openly proclaimed. Immediately after Hofbauer's death, it seemed as though the movement which he had begun would come to naught, and the state of things Catholic would remain as of old, if it did not indeed become worse than before Vienna's Apostle appeared on the scene. The Educational Institute at the "Scheiblauer House," for example, was dissolved shortly after the death of Klinkowstroem. The publication of "Die Oelzweige," too, notwithstanding the undoubted popularity of this journal, had to be suspended, never to be resumed. Even in the Archiepiscopal See of Vienna the Josephist Milde held sway for a period of years without meeting any serious opposition. In fact, nothing remained as the visible, tangible results of the Saint's lifelong activities but the Congregation of the Redemptorists, which was now at length legally established in Austria, and the most influential members of which were the first-fruits of the Catholic movement at the University.

And yet, it would be an egregious mistake to imagine that in the legal status acquired by the Congregation we behold the sum-total, the whole fruit of Hofbauer's apostolate in Vienna. Men who knew Hofbauer personally, or who were not far removed from his time, and who therefore had ample opportunity to witness the rejuvenation of Austria during the decades following immediately upon the Saint's death, do not hesitate to describe Hofbauer's mission as one whose work left its beneficent influence stamped upon the whole country. It will suffice to quote as testimony to this fact only the words

of Cardinal Rauscher, one of the latest disciples of Hofbauer, who from his high position as Prince-Archbishop of Vienna had a better survey of those years than most others, and who, besides declaring that the Concordat with Rome was the final result of Hofbauer's work, makes this remarkable statement: "Hofbauer may be looked upon as the restorer of ecclesiastical life in Vienna. It was he that turned the tide into better channels; and it is only from his time that we can speak of a Catholic Vienna and of a Catholic life in Vienna."

CHAPTER VIII

THE SAINT'S CONFLICT WITH THE PARTY OF THE "ILLUMINATI" (1817–1819)

WE shall now proceed with the narration of those events which still remain to complete the outline of the biography of our Saint. Our narrative has brought us very near the year 1818. But two years more and the saintly pilgrim will have reached the end of his wearisome journey. His declining years, however, were to be set in surroundings quite different from those that Hofbauer had pictured to himself or desired. They were not to resemble the quiet, peaceful months spent at Tivoli, but rather the stormy years that preceded the suppression of St. Benno's. The very year that proved to be the last of his life found him in precisely the same position that he had occupied at Warsaw in the month of June, 1808. The weary old man was within a hair's breadth of being compelled again to undergo the hardships of banishment. At the last moment, just as his doom seemed to be sealed, things took an unexpected turn: not only was he permitted to pass his last days in his fatherland, but the dream of his Novitiate burst into glad fulfilment almost over night. The incredible happened: Josephist Austria opened its doors to the Congregation!

It has already been remarked that this dramatic close of the active life of our Saint stands in intimate connection with his apostolate among the youth of his time. To the Party of the "Illuminati" Hofbauer became daily more and more odious. It was quite proper that he should be indefatigable in hearing confessions and visiting the sick. He might also be pardoned for leading Protestants back to the Church, especially as these converts were for the most part foreigners, upon whom the "enlightened" Viennese looked down with a certain contempt. Some offense might indeed be taken at the manner of his preaching; still, there was a mitigating circumstance

in the fact that his audience consisted mostly of the common people. But, that his spirit should dare to intrude and begin to be in evidence even at the University — this was insufferable!

Three of the Professors of the Theological Faculty were disciples and intimate friends of the Director of St. Ursula's: Canon Ackermann, of Klosterneuberg, who as the successor of Jahn taught the Old Testament, and the two Benedictines of Wiblingen — Zaengerle, the Professor of the New Testament, and Ziegler, the Professor of Dogmatic Theology. Zaengerle was a particularly faithful follower of Hofbauer's; he had even expressed a hope, some day to be permitted to make his novitiate again under the saintly Redemptorist. Zaengerle and Ziegler were likewise prominent as pulpit orators, and ably seconded the Saint's efforts to reform the manner of preaching in Vienna. Like Hofbauer and Werner, these two men were "ultramontanes," and as such drew upon themselves the watchful eye of the authorities.

And then there was the great number of Hofbauer's students at the University! These young men, it seemed, were becoming daily more fearless in expressing and defending their views. Even the progress of the various lectures was frequently interrupted by clashes between the professors and the students. Matters became so unbearable for Professor Dolliner who, a Josephist of the old stamp, still taught Canon Law, that he began to threaten to call in the police. Indeed, the disciples of Hofbauer came to be regarded at the University as almost a distinct party, whose growth was watched with alarm and dismay by the old Party of the "Illuminati," formerly so safe in its position. A police report informs us that the Privy Council had been petitioned by the University circles to interfere, lest the brightest men, following the example of the eminent Professor Veith, should gradually be weaned away from their first allegiance. On all sides were heard loud complaints that Hofbauer was turning the heads of the students.

The Saint had stirred up a hornets' nest. In fact, the University of Vienna was, according to his own expression, "the real nest" of the "Illuminati." To re-establish genuine Catholic thought and sentiment there, meant nothing less than

to threaten the entire movement of the "Illuminati" at its very source. Hofbauer's doom was sealed.

A number of political documents are extant to show clearly that since the midyear of 1817 certain parties were active in trying to destroy the influence of Hofbauer, and if possible to have him expelled from Austria. That these efforts proceeded principally from cliques at the University seems to be borne out by the fact that the ex-Benedictine of Wiblingen, Augustine Braig, appears as the chief of the Saint's adversaries. Braig had preceded Ziegler as Professor of Dogmatic Theology in Vienna (1804–1814), and, as Vice-Director, regulated the theological studies from 1814 to 1817. What his tendencies were may be gathered from the fact that, in 1816, Metternich recommended him to the Emperor as the man best qualified to support Wessenberg's efforts at Frankfort as the representative of Austria. In 1817, when Braig was appointed Canon of St. Stephen's, Professor Zaengerle succeeded him as Vice-Director of the Theological Faculty. In his new position, and as Spiritual Commissary of the Government of Lower Austria, Braig had ample means at hand to deal sternly with the Director of St. Ursula's, who was at all events merely tolerated.

Of the persecution which the Saint had now to endure for almost two years, those friends and disciples of Hofbauer's who were still living at the time of the Process of his Beatification, could give only meager and indefinite accounts. He never conversed with them upon these matters. All that was known in an indistinct way was, that there was some sort of movement on foot against him. The political documents, however, give us a clearer insight into this painful episode of his life.

In June, 1817, complaints were again launched against his manner of preaching. This old man, it was said, does not suit the times, and should be forbidden to occupy the pulpit. Agents were again deputed to act as eavesdroppers at Hofbauer's sermons; but they, in a sense, were more objective in their judgments than his pharisaical accusers. "Hofbauer," one of them reported, "has an audience of his own, made up mostly of gardeners and other people living in the suburbs,

among whom he is held in high esteem, and for whom his sermons are well suited." Another agent criticizes only his unpolished manner and awkward gestures: "Thus, for example, he leans with both hands upon the pulpit, bobbing his head toward his hearers; then he suddenly stands erect, and throws back his head; after discoursing in quiet tones for a while, he begins without warning to shout unmercifully; again, he sets up a great noise by pounding down upon the pulpit with both hands, and in other ways carries on in his zeal."

Count Sedlnitzky, who became Chief of Police in this year,[1] laid these complaints before the Archbishop. This time, however, His Grace took a firmer stand than he had taken two years before. In a Circular Letter, dated September 24, after paying his compliments to the fashionable preachers of Vienna, he came out openly in the Saint's defense. Hofbauer could now continue to preach unmolested. But this did not mean that he had nothing to fear: there were other complaints urged against him. In fact, everything that seemed at all likely to bring him into conflict with the law was ferreted out and exposed to the light. He did not concern himself, it was said, about the regulations for divine services, he conducted processions in the church, etc. . . . He scattered broadcast superstitious leaflets with indulgences; he was responsible that the people were again thronging to places of pilgrimage: these and similar accusations were brought against him. Special attention was paid to his relations with the young. Repeatedly also spies had succeeded in gaining admittance to the evening gatherings at the Saint's house, but they were nearly always frustrated in their designs. Hofbauer generally recognized them immediately, and therefore would begin to speak on the ordinary topics of the day, about which he was usually little concerned, or would make use of still simpler methods. One agent in his report excused himself for his meager account, saying that he understood nothing of the entire conversation, as it was carried on in Latin.

[1] He held this office until the events that took place in March, 1848. "By his negligence and severity, Sedlnitzky contributed more to bring the Austrian Government into ill-repute both at home and abroad than any other of the higher officials." *Beidtel,* II. p. 220.)

Hofbauer was particularly suspected of aiding young people to leave the country and enter convents outside the realm, as he had previously done in 1795. Credit must, forsooth, be given to the police of Vienna: they developed a remarkably keen sense for finding out things. In consequence of these findings of the police, the authorities, among other cases, took up the case of Father Libotzky, claiming that Hofbauer had sent him to Wallachia without the knowledge and consent of his mother. The following case proved more complicated. In the fall of 1817, the daughter of a certain citizen of Vienna suddenly disappeared. It was rumored that she had entered a convent in Rome. Suspicion immediately fell upon Hofbauer as having a hand in the game. This time, however, the authorities were evidently on the wrong scent; still, the case dragged on for months. After it had been reported by Siber, Sedlnitzky, the Chief of Police, proposed to submit it to the Consistory for investigation. It is very significant that Siber advised against this course, for the reason that Hohenwart might thus discover more than they wished him to know: and furthermore, he argued, in this case, it was important that Hofbauer be taken unawares by an unexpected investigation, and for this purpose Braig would be best fitted. Nevertheless, the Archbishop was commissioned to examine the case, and hence Hofbauer was obliged to appear before the Consistory. It was probably on this occasion that the scene, which Sebastian Brunner says a friend brought to his knowledge, was enacted. In the course of the investigation, Hofbauer was asked with all official formality, what religion he professed. "Why," replied the Saint, "everybody knows that I am a Catholic priest!" His words were construed into a contempt of court, and he received a sharp reprimand. Whereupon he made comment: "I see, it is not good to be here; I shall leave"; and bowing politely to his judges, without further ado he left the room. The High Court accordingly found itself suddenly deprived of its prisoner. The Archbishop was not at all offended at the ready action of his friend; in fact, he quite approved of his speedy method of disposing of the case. Some of the Canons themselves, recognizing the ridiculous situation in which the escape of the defendant placed them, broke forth

into unrestrained laughter. Others among them, however, looked more seriously upon the affair. It was probably on this occasion that one of the Canons remarked: "This priest ought to be put in irons, for he has nothing but contempt for the laws of the land." The investigation into this case of the missing girl remained without results; and on February 28, 1818, Sedlnitzky had to report to the Emperor, that there was no law to justify the banishment of this priest from the realm.

For the next few months Hofbauer was not molested, but the authorities secretly still had him closely shadowed. He understood the gravity of his situation full well. At this juncture especially, when so promising a movement for the regeneration of Austria was under way, he realized the need of shunning the public notice more than ever before. His letter of May 8, 1818, to Madame Sophia Schlosser, already referred to, reveals the mental depression into which he was cast by these events. "The grace of God," he writes, "is operating with an especial force in the hearts of the young people who are devoting themselves to study. If it were permitted and desired, there should soon be a great change here among the student-body. . . . I have also been frequently accused of misleading the young. . . . Oh, how often do I not long to bury myself in some desert where I should not be obliged to witness the immeasurable amount of good that one could do, but is not permitted to do."

In the fall of this year, Hofbauer's enemies made a fresh attempt to have him removed from Vienna, and this time his situation became very critical. The immediate cause of this new trouble was Father Sabelli. Tired of Vienna, he had recourse to Father Giattini with the petition to be transferred to an Italian convent. His request was granted, but in a manner very humiliating for Father Hofbauer. The Saint was not insensible to chagrin and disappointment from this source. Sabelli and Giattini, acting in concert, if not in collusion, brought him face to face with an accomplished fact, and cut him to the very soul. When the Auditor of the Nunciature brought him Giattini's letter, on September 24, the humbled and mortified man wept like a child. Anxiety over the con-

sequence of the affair also worried him. The Government placed every imaginable obstacle in the way of a cleric's going to Rome. If Sabelli actually carried out his intention, he should have to do so secretly, and in the event of his being discovered, Hofbauer had to fear the worst for himself, especially now that his opponents were looking for a cause to bring him to trial. That night he did not close an eye in sleep. The following morning Father Stark wrote to Cardinal Severoli. His long letter expresses the just indignation of a good child at the wrong done to his beloved father. As the Nuncio Leardi also objected to Sabelli's departure, the permission to transfer his domicile to Italy was revoked, and Hofbauer was authorized to send him either to Bucharest or to Friburg. Since Sabelli no longer wished to remain in Vienna, although, as Cardinal Severoli remarked, he had there a rich, if hidden, field of labor, he was accordingly assigned to the house at Friburg (Valsainte).

What Hofbauer had been dreading so much, now actually came to pass. Replying the queries of those that were filling out his passport, Sabelli declared that he was being sent to Switzerland on matters relating to the Congregation. The complaints lodged against Hofbauer, in 1815, relative to his dealings with the Jesuits, had already established beyond the shadow of doubt, that he belonged to the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer, that he was a Superior in this religious body, and that he maintained by letter regular communication with his brethren in Poland, Switzerland, and Wallachia. In all this, however, nothing had been discovered to prove that he had come into conflict with the existing laws of the land. But in the meantime, his enemies had found it necessary to get rid of this troublesome man. When, therefore, Sabelli's transfer to Switzerland again drew the attention of the authorities to Hofbauer's relations outside the realm, the resolution was passed to sift the matter thoroughly. The First Article of the Josephist Patent of March 24, 1781, seemed to contain a clause enjoining all Religious Houses in Austria to sever entirely and forever all communication with Provinces, Convents, Superiors, and other Religious Houses outside the realm. Written proofs of such forbidden communication were now

to be furnished by an unexpected search of Hofbauer's house. In accordance with the proposal made by Siber in the foregoing year, the Consistory was ignored on this occasion, and Canon Braig was commissioned to take Hofbauer by surprise with a sudden invasion of his abode. Accordingly, at an early hour on November 12, 1818, Braig, accompanied by Professor Kaufmann and a servant, appeared at the home of the Saint. Only Madlener was in the house at the time. Hofbauer was at once sent for, and Madlener was dismissed. The uninvited guests now locked themselves in the house with Hofbauer. Every nook and corner of the building was first searched. Hofbauer meanwhile sat in a corner and recited his rosary. The results of the search did not prove very satisfactory. The Saint, it seems, had long had a secret foreboding of just such trouble as this, and had accordingly long ago prepared for such an emergency by usually burning the letters he received as soon as possible. The search concluded, the supposed culprit was now subjected to a hearing. This time there was no escape for the Saint, as there had been when recently summoned before the Consistory.

In order to gain his ends Braig now essayed to put upon the law the most questionable and arbitrary interpretations. On the strength of the above-named Patent of 1781, he offered Hofbauer the alternative of securing a release from his religious vows or of quitting the country. Aside from the question whether this law, which speaks only of Religious Houses, was applicable also to individual Religious — a matter which was doubted even by the authorities themselves — Braig took the liberty of putting upon it two false interpretations. The Patent required Religious living in Austria to sever only all external relations with convents outside the realm; but it in no way demanded that they be dispensed from their religious vows. This, therefore, was the first false construction that Braig placed upon the law. If the law had been intended to be interpreted in this sense, all Religious in Austria belonging to an Order whose higher Superiors resided outside the realm, would have been obliged after March 24, 1781, to permit themselves to be secularized — a foolish assertion, of which no one ever dreamed. In the second place, Braig as-

sumed, of his own authority, to inflict upon Hofbauer for his unlawful relations a penalty which the law itself not so much as mentioned, namely, banishment from the country. The fact is, that for a born Austrian this punishment did not exist, not even for criminals. The most that Braig was legally authorized to do in this case, was to give Hofbauer the choice either of breaking off his correspondence with his brethren outside the realm, or of holding himself in readiness to undergo the penalty prescribed by law. To fix the penalty, or to impose it, was no part of Braig's business, as he was acting merely as Commissary of the investigation.

Of course, Braig's one and only aim was to force from Hofbauer the declaration that he would leave the country, and in this he succeeded only too well. According to all appearances, it never occurred to Hofbauer to insist that Braig submit to him the full text of the Patent. On the contrary, regarding the choice of either of the alternatives presented as unavoidable, he seems to have resigned himself without protest to the inevitable, by immediately complying with Braig's demands. He declared himself in favor of leaving the country, as he would under no consideration become unfaithful to his vows. He requested, however, that he be permitted to postpone his departure until the following spring. With his own hand and seal he ratified his own written resolve to leave Austria, instead of leaving the Commissary free to draw his own conclusions from his refusal to submit to be secularized. Braig could now feel satisfied with what he had accomplished; but he did not escape entirely unscathed. The hearing concluded, Hofbauer asked him, "Have we finished now?" And as Braig replied that this was the end of the process, Hofbauer, with his finger raised heavenward in a gesture of menace, rejoined: "No, this is not the end: one thing yet remains — the Last Judgment!" That Braig and Kaufmann died suddenly a short time afterward is only a legend: they both outlived the Saint; but the Saint's parting salutation to them could hardly have been without its crushing effect.

It was time for dinner when the Commissary departed. Hofbauer gave the usual signal with the little bell for the Particular Examen. At table only his pale, troubled features gave

an inkling of what had happened. Not a word about the affair escaped his lips; it was a secret of his own. Not until after his death did his disciples learn from indirect sources what had occurred that morning behind those closed doors.

As the emigration of a subject, without the permission of the monarch, was prohibited, the entire proceeding in Hofbauer's case was thus brought to the notice of the Emperor. In Chancellor Saurau's report mention was made, of course, of Hofbauer's unlawful relations with convents outside the realm. His resolve to quit the country, however, was represented as a voluntary petition.

The estimates of the Saint's character and work, as set down in the report, were worse than unfavorable, — they were malicious. The document countenanced the postponement of his departure until May, 1819, but suggested that, pending his departure, his jurisdiction at St. Ursula's be withdrawn, and that he be required to pledge himself never again to return to Austria. Lorenz, one of the Counselors of State, expressed his fears lest the evil which Hofbauer had set on foot should not cease even after his removal, since with such supporters and co-laborers as Helfferich, Cardinal Severoli, and Werner operating in Vienna itself and elsewhere, "this senseless religious fanaticism, so dangerous to the Church and State" was almost sure to be perpetuated. On the main point, however, the Emperor was wholly deceived. He did not in the least suspect that Hofbauer's petition for permission to leave the country was made, not of his own free volition, but because he had been forced to do so in an entirely illegal manner. On December 26, 1818, the sixty-eighth birthday of the Saint, Emperor Francis signed what he deemed Hofbauer's voluntary petition to emigrate, granting him the requested permission, but forbidding the officials to demand of him a promise never again to return to Austria. His Majesty even declared that, so long as Hofbauer of his own accord wished to leave the country, he would make no objection; but as the priest was a native Austrian, he would never expel him.

This Imperial Rescript by no means placed the success of Hofbauer's enemies beyond all doubt, since it left the Saint

free to use or not to use the Emperor's permission to emigrate. They recognized the need of applying further pressure. On January 10, 1819, the Chancellor Saurau informed the Archbishop of the Emperor's decision, yet so as to leave His Grace under the impression, that Hofbauer had no choice in the matter, but was obliged by order of His Majesty to leave the realm not later than May 1, and that by virtue of the same order Hofbauer's jurisdiction at St. Ursula's was to be withdrawn immediately. In this sense Hohenwart acquainted Hofbauer with the terms of the order, on January 14. Believing it unwise and unnecessary to remain silent longer, the Saint now decided to give the Archbishop the true history of his petition to emigrate. That he should wish of his own free will to leave the country, he explained, was preposterous; on the contrary, he had flattered himself that the many years he had spent in laboring for the spiritual welfare of the Viennese had won him a new right to remain in the capital. Simultaneously Hohenwart received an urgent petition from the nuns of St. Ursula's, who, not by any utterance of the Saint's, but in some roundabout way, had received information of what was going on. The nuns pleaded with the Archbishop not to deprive them of their Spiritual Father. "We consider ourselves fortunate," they wrote, "in having such a director, and our only hope is that God will prolong his life. Led by his spirit and example we live in peace and quiet, and this is, after all, the greatest of blessings any religious community can desire or enjoy. We beg Your Grace not to countenance the designs of those that would shatter our happiness and threaten our well-being. If he were taken from us by death, we should recognize in his removal the will and the wisdom of God; but so long as this does not happen, we cannot but wish and beg not to be deprived of him."

Hohenwart himself declared to the Emperor that in losing Hofbauer he was losing his best priest. The whole bureaucratic game now came to light. On February 7, 1819, Chancellor Saurau received the following Cabinet document: "It has transpired that the Priest Hofbauer, of Vienna, declared his intention of leaving the country, not of his own free choice, but under compulsion, inasmuch as a Commission from the

Government placed before him at his home the alternative of renouncing his religious vows or of quitting the realm; likewise, that he was ordered, as if pursuant to our will, to leave our Empire by May 1 of this year. You shall demand an explanation of both these points and submit to us a report approved by the entire Court-Chancery. The Priest Hofbauer is to be notified that he shall remain in Vienna until further orders from us, and that he shall continue to discharge his office as Confessor at the convent of the Ursuline nuns."

At this time the Emperor was just about to set out for Italy. This caused a further delay in the development of the case. Father Sabelli having departed for Switzerland soon after the New Year, Father Stark moved over from the "Welsh Church" (as the church of the Italians, or foreigners, was called), to St. Ursula's. Don Pajalich, who had just completed his theological course and obtained the Doctorate, and who was resolved to become a Redemptorist, took Father Stark's place.

In spite of the favorable turn of the tide resulting from Hohenwart's intervention, Hofbauer was convinced that his days in Vienna were numbered; in fact, he almost longed to get away from the capital. The experiences of the past few weeks filled his heart with sadness. In one thing, at least, his opponents had succeeded, namely, in rendering the thought of remaining longer in Vienna extremely distasteful to him. Writing to Father Passerat, in January, 1819, Father Stark remarked: "Father Hofbauer is not only much chagrined and depressed, but the capital has now become so insufferable to him that for this reason alone he is firmly determined to leave Vienna this coming May." He had not yet decided whither he would go. He hesitated between Friburg and Rome; and he once more took up the project of establishing the missions in Canada. The thought of being able to labor without restrictions in America had something very fascinating about it. Meanwhile he continued to work faithfully and quietly at his usual post of duty. But the additional burdens placed on his shoulders by Sabelli's departure, the rigor with which, in spite of his advanced age, he even now observed Lent, and especially the mental strain of the past few months,

proved too heavy a demand on his strength and exacted toll in terms of health. Toward the end of Lent he fell seriously ill. Of the nature and duration of this illness we have no particulars. Father Stark wrote to Passerat that for a time he feared for the life of Hofbauer. But the Saint's strong constitution survived this attack, as it had survived others in the past. On Tuesday of Holy Week, according to the chronicler at St. Ursula's, he was still confined to bed; but on Holy Saturday she wrote: "The Resurrection services were magnificent. A cordon of the militia stood guard around the Holy Sepulcher and took part in the procession. Preceding the canopy, not counting the four Levites, walked twelve priests wearing surplices and carrying wax candles, and after the canopy followed twelve men attired in black and likewise carrying wax candles." It was Hofbauer's last Easter on earth. He now recuperated rapidly. When Mary Rizy saw him for the first time after this illness and burst into tears of joy, he said, smiling: "You are fine friends; you do not even wish one to get to heaven." Then he continued in a serious tone: "I should gladly have died this time — very gladly; but so long as God has ordained otherwise, I am satisfied."

The first half of the year 1819 had thus been one of the most trying epochs of his life. Janow, Bucharest, the condition of the Church of Germany, his present position in Vienna — all were so many memorials of his disappointments and failures: everywhere, whithersoever he turned his gaze, he beheld nothing but blighted hopes, heavy cares, and heart-wringing trials. And let it be said in passing, that little misunderstandings arose even among his more intimate friends, which alone, for a man of his fine sensibilities, must have been a fruitful source of suffering. We refer especially to Frederick Schlegel, who, in 1818, had returned from Frankfort to Vienna, where he was received with whole-hearted sympathy by his friends. Metternich, it is true, remained favorably inclined toward him — he permitted him, for instance, to join the imperial retinue when Francis journeyed to Italy — but Schlegel was given no further civil employment; he was pensioned. The unfortunate ending of this politico-ecclesiastical episode of his life contributed much to his devoting himself again ex-

clusively to literary pursuits, and disdainfully cutting loose from everything that even in appearance bore the semblance of religious or political activity. In some of his letters to Dorothy he speaks almost with scorn of the political Catholicism of his friends. Every party-matter in religion is an abomination to him. Schlegel now assumed the same attitude in regard to the "Hofbauer Party" that Mueller had taken before him. "And even if they should place Hofbauer himself at the head of this party," he wrote, "while I should be sorry, I should not join it. It would perhaps have been better for the cause and its integrity, if our opponents had triumphed. It is victory, not persecution, that always brings real danger in its wake." [2] Elsewhere he expresses himself in still stronger terms: "The friends in Vienna are very much given to gossip and calumny. . . . Pilat is again writing me the most stupid and nonsensical letters, and I must do violence to myself not to take them seriously." [3]

We are not now in a position to form a fair judgment upon these utterances, as we do not know the circumstances that caused Schlegel to become so embittered. But this much at least seems certain: the thorough-going egoist, which Schlegel always was, would not have spoken in this fashion, if his lofty political ambition had not been so completely crushed at Frankfort. The "genial child" now fell into the opposite extreme. He had set out for Frankfort upon a cloud of enthusiasm; he returned to denounce the Diet as the veriest dog-show. Whereas before he had his sword belted at his side, ready for action and eager to fight for the Church against the Protestants, he now does not wish even to hear of a dogmatic controversy.[4] It may be admitted, on the other hand, that some of his friends, such as Penckler and Pilat, laid too much stress on the polemic element in their politics. Hofbauer, assuredly, had not sided with either party. Matters developed this way of themselves. Wherever Catholic life awakens anew, and encounters great obstacles to its full development in state and society, factions must inevitably arise. Thus it was in this case. "The Romanticist-Catholic party," writes a certain author, "— a party which originally was entirely imbued with peaceful tendencies, gradually changed under the bureau-

[2] Eckardt, *Hofbauer*, p. 78. [3] *Ibidem*. [4] *Ibidem*.

cratic pressure which the police department of the times brought to bear upon it, into a party prepared to fight, and eventually became as hostile to the traditional form of government as the liberal and democratic opposition itself." [5] Schlegel's remarks about Pilat show that, even during Hofbauer's last years, affairs had begun to be turned into this new channel. It was not, however, until the collapse of the old order of things, in 1848, that they definitely assumed this altered course.

There can be no question of a serious misunderstanding between Hofbauer and Schlegel, notwithstanding the fact that there were traits in Schlegel that might easily have occasioned a breach between them. Such, for example, was his peculiar enthusiasm for mesmerism. The Saint was utterly opposed to every such teaching or hypothesis that seemed even in the least to mar the purity of faith. Dr. Veith relates an interesting incident, revealing how severely the Saint impugned such matters even in his most intimate and learned friends, though he did so without wounding charity or friendship. On a certain occasion Schlegel was expounding his views on magnetism and kindred topics to a small circle of friends. Hofbauer, who was present, was deeply hurt. For a while he succeeded in practising patience. "That is nothing — nothing at all," he kept repeating to himself. But Schlegel would not be dissuaded. At last Hofbauer arose suddenly, threw his arms about the big, stout man, shook him heartily, and said: "After all, you are my Frederick!" And so, to the chagrin of Schlegel, the lecture this time came to a dismal end.

The numerous trials that Hofbauer had to endure during this half year were not entirely without their admixture of encouragement and consolation. The House at Valsainte and the Klinkowstroem Institute were a real comfort to him during these trying months. A far greater happiness was still in store for him, very close at hand. In June he received from the South, the birthplace of his beloved Congregation, the news that the second great hour of his life had arrived — the hour which would set upon all his hopes and prayers and labors and strivings and sufferings the crown of achievement and victory.

[5] E. Guglia, *Religious Life in Vienna*, 1815–1830. (*Allgemeine Zeitung, 1891, Supplement, 128, 129.*)

CHAPTER IX

THE ADMISSION OF THE CONGREGATION INTO AUSTRIA — HOFBAUER'S LAST ILLNESS — HIS DEATH AND BURIAL (MARCH, 1820)

FATHER HOFBAUER'S case dragged along without his conviction or exculpation during the spring of 1819. As the verdict, however, was soon to be rendered, the police, in the hope of discovering new evidence or charges against him, relaxed none of their vigilance. Pressure was brought to bear on the Archduke Rainer, who was the representative of the Emperor in the latter's absence, to force the removal of Hofbauer. The attempt proved an utter failure. "What Vienna needs," the Archduke replied, "is half a dozen more men like Hofbauer."

Since Charles V, no Emperor had entered Rome in such splendor as did Emperor Francis, in April, 1819. The Pope summoned to his service all the vast resources of his ecclesiastical and worldly magnificence, and displayed them lavishly to do honor to his royal guest. Forty thousand visitors had assembled in Rome to witness the meeting between the Pope and the Emperor, "and," remarks a certain writer, "many a sentiment of respect, long submerged by the storms that had swept over Europe, was thereby revived." The Catholic party in Vienna attached great importance to the Emperor's visit to the Eternal City, and hoped it would restore religion to its rightful place in the esteem of the people. Metternich, however, divining these fond expectations, endeavored at once to quench them with the assurance that "the Emperor would not bring with him a single Jesuit back to Vienna, and, as a consequence, the Penckler party would have little cause for rejoicing." In the same spirit of divesting the Emperor's presence in Rome of all ecclesiastical significance, Metternich warned Pilat against letting any reports from Rome appear in the "Austrian Observer."

Metternich was right: the Emperor did not bring the Jesuits back with him from Rome; but he did bring the Redemptorists to Vienna, inasmuch as their admission into Austria was given serious consideration on this journey, resulting in the legal recognition of the Congregation in the Empire. Leardi, the Papal Nuncio at Vienna, arriving in Rome three weeks in advance of the Emperor, had informed Pope Pius VII of the critical situation in which Hofbauer was placed, and His Holiness had resolved to intercede with His Majesty in behalf of the humble Redemptorist. He could do this all the more easily, as Francis was completely captivated by the Pope's charming personality. Indeed, the Emperor's admiration for the reigning Pontiff was such, that he was "sorry," he said, "that he could not have the Pope as his Archbishop in Vienna, to set him in opposition to the exorbitant pretensions of the Roman Curia." In one of his audiences with the Emperor, the Pope incidentally referred to Hofbauer. Congratulating His Majesty on possessing in the ranks of the Austrian clergy a number of zealous priests, he cited Father Hofbauer as an example, styling him a truly apostolic man, an ornament of the clergy, and a pillar of the Church. With shrewd diplomacy, the Pope, playing delicately upon certain of the Emperor's pet contentions, remarked, as if unconsciously, that Hofbauer was dissatisfied with the Romans, because they did not know how to deal properly with the Germans, adding that, according to Hofbauer's oft-repeated assertion, far more could be effected with the Germans, if those at Rome knew how to handle them. These words of the Holy Father came as a revelation to the Monarch. After the audience, the Emperor remarked to his Confessor, Father Darnaut, with evident signs of deep emotion, that Father Hofbauer had been wronged, and to show how sorry he was for the venerable old man, he would be glad to know of some way of pleasing him. Darnaut, a friend of our Saint's, was ready with a suggestion: "Hofbauer," he said, "is most desirous of establishing his Congregation in Austria; the permission to do so, he would regard as sufficient compensation for all the wrong that has been done him." The Emperor immediately promised to give the subject due consideration.

After Easter the journey of the Emperor and his retinue was continued to Naples. In the meantime, there arrived from Vienna, with the report of the current acts of the judiciary, also the report which the Emperor had demanded of the Court-Chancery in explanation of its treatment of Hofbauer. The duty of presenting these papers, and of preparing the decisions of His Majesty, fell to Baron Stifft, the private physician of the Emperor. Stifft was not intimately acquainted with Hofbauer, but he was an upright and honorable man, who from the long-spun, rambling report of the Court-Chancery perceived at once that all was not in order in that department. He subjected the proceedings of the Court to a severe criticism. "The manner and procedure of these negotiations," he wrote, "call for a closer investigation, as they will furnish a striking example of the policies generally prevailing in these our times. I am not personally acquainted with Hofbauer; but the Archbishop and several other eminent and trustworthy men assure me that he is a very zealous priest. The Ursulines, too, addressed a very urgent appeal to the Archbishop to be permitted to retain his services, when they were about to lose him as their confessor and spiritual director. Moreover, the Countess Julia Zichy, who was so distinguished for her exemplary life and deep religious convictions, was a regular penitent of his." The proceedings instituted against Hofbauer by the Court-Chancery, Stifft declared, were contrary to all law and arbitrary in the extreme; by glancing over its report, the Emperor might see for himself "how the law of 1781 had been twisted and distorted to make it apply to this case." Stifft suggested that the Emperor reprimand the Court for its high-handed conduct of the case. As evidence of the treatment accorded Hofbauer, the Baron submitted the following text: "The priest Hofbauer shall be ordered to renounce all further relations with the Order of the Liguorians, which is not tolerated in our States; failing such renunciation, the penalties prescribed by law shall be inflicted upon him." With his own hand the Emperor changed the text to read: "The priest Hofbauer shall be ordered to renounce all further relations with the Order of the Liguorians, which is not tolerated in our States, but whose statutes are to be submitted to us. . . . Naples, May 23,

1819." Instead, therefore, of threatening to punish Hofbauer, the Emperor unequivocally declared his readiness to grant to the Congregation, which as yet was not tolerated within the limits of his domains, legal admission into Austria. This decision reached Hofbauer, on June 22. It was accompanied by a request to submit an explanation of the Rule and Object of his Congregation. Three days later, after a consultation with the Nuncio, he forwarded the required information. This he was able to do with a clear conscience, for neither did the exposition of the Rule touch upon the religious vows, nor was it necessary to refer to his relations with Superiors outside the realm, for outwardly and officially such relations between him and the General of the Congregation, or between him and his brethren in Switzerland, had, in fact, not existed for years. In his report to the Governor of Lower Austria he presented an account of these matters with childlike simplicity and candor, and without qualifying clause, reservation, or subterfuge. He went even farther than this, and with delicate conscientiousness confessed to having congratulated the new General, Father Mansione, on his election. His strained relations with the Congregation in Italy, which have already been described, now served him in good stead: he could adduce the fact that he had learned of the election of the new General only "accidentally, by word of mouth." He adds: "I am all the more prepared at the present time to submit to the supreme command of His Majesty, as I am convinced that I am, in my present condition here in Vienna, satisfying the demands of our Blessed Founder, by devoting myself, to the exclusion of all other business and to the best of my ability, to the salvation of the souls of others."

After the return of the Emperor, who had reached Schoenbrunn again on August 2, Hofbauer was summoned to appear before the Chaplain of the Castle, Dr. Jacob Frint, who had accompanied the Emperor on his journey. After conversing for several hours with the Saint, Frint was so filled with reverence for him that he wished to kiss his hand. During this interview Hofbauer learned of the Emperor's decision to admit the Congregation legally into Austria. What must have been his sentiments as he wended his way back to his home in Seiler

Place after this interview! No doubt they were much the same as those with which, on that rainy Sunday morning forty years ago, he went back to his home at the "Eiserne Birne" from St. Stephen's, a candidate for the priesthood — assured at last of attaining the first goal of his dearest desires. The second great goal of his life was now in sight! One of his young friends, the jurist Ritter von Unkhrechtsberg, who had learned the good news, had occasion to observe him on that day. During the evening recreation, surrounded by his disciples, his lips breathed not a word concerning the momentous mystery. His countenance, illumined by a ray of heartfelt, holy joy in God, indeed seemed to radiate a more peaceful serenity than heretofore; beyond that, he gave no further indication to those about him, that anything unusual had happened.

The Emperor likewise invited Hofbauer to an audience, — perhaps the first vouchsafed the Saint with the Austrian Ruler since the year 1797. His Majesty expressed the desire to confer on him some special favor; and to the ardent wish of his heart to see the Congregation established in Austria, Hofbauer added only the request that the Church of Maria-Stiegen be entrusted to him. The circumstances that induced him to make this request were as follows. Since 1810, after the Church of St. John, in Kaertner Street, had been assigned to the Hungarians, negotiations had been a-foot to give the numerous Slavs residing in Vienna a church of their own. The Consistory at first suggested the church of the Capuchins, which was located near the new market. But, in 1812, the Emperor himself definitely selected Maria-Stiegen for this purpose, and accordingly ordered this church, which had been closed since 1797, reopened for divine worship. But to convert this church into a national temple of worship for the Slavs was a matter presenting its own peculiar difficulties. Not only did the edifice stand in need of a thorough renovation, but there were no priests of that nationality at hand to take over its direcion; and no one seemed able to offer a solution to the immediate problem of procuring the funds necessary to supply both these needs. The Bohemian and Moravian branches of the Slav element, to whom an appeal had been made, declined to help; a subscription had similarly failed

to produce results. At length, in 1817, the Emperor began the work of repairing the sacred edifice at his own expense; but the rest of the problem — that of providing the priests who were to take charge of the church — still remained to be solved. At this juncture Hofbauer appeared on the scene. Relying on the assistance of Divine Providence, he declared himself ready to conduct the divine services for the Slavs at Maria-Stiegen, without laying claim to any remuneration. The Emperor asked him whether he felt able to meet all the demands that would be made on him. His reply was: "If we have God and Your Majesty for our friends, we are sufficiently protected."

After all these years, the success of the Saint's plans was at last assured, and had he so wished he could have opened a large Novitiate at once. A number of his disciples had already resolved to enter the Congregation, among them some students who had been ordained during the summer, notably Dr. Madlener. Werner, too, declared his intention of becoming a Redemptorist. Several months, however, were to elapse before matters had been finally and suitably arranged for a propitious beginning. The admission of a new Congregation into Austria was an event of no slight moment: it meant a formal break with the Josephist past. That all precipitation had consequently to be avoided, will very readily be understood.

The circle of the Saint's disciples had widened considerably during the past few months. We shall mention here only one of the new-comers — Othmar Ritter von Rauscher, at the time a law-student of the fourth year's course, and later the eminent Cardinal and Prince-Archbishop of Vienna. He became acquainted with Hofbauer through his colleague Unkhrechtsberg. Rauscher's mother at once became fearful lest her eldest son, the hope of the family, and now nearing the completion of his studies, should take up the study of theology, as so many others had done. In tearful letters to her absent husband, she depicted the remarkable change that was being effected in her "Pepi": at first he received the Holy Sacraments once a week, then three times a week, and now, she says, he goes to Confession and Communion every day. He has no time for anything but prayer and study; he speaks

little, and then only of spiritual matters; he has an aversion for the theater. The good woman finally carried her grievances to the Emperor, complaining to him that her son had drifted into Hofbauer's company. "Leave him there," the Emperor advised; nevertheless, to quiet her, he promised to have the police look into the matter.

In the beautiful evenings of this autumn the Saint frequently went abroad with his disciples. In doing so he had a twofold object in view: to divest the young men of any remnant of human respect that still clung to them; and to convince the public at large, before the actual admission of his Congregation into their native land, that he was not carrying on any secret work, since he ventured to teach his disciples even in the public streets. He intentionally led the way into the more frequented sections of the city, like the "Prater" and the bastions. Oftentimes, when he paused to narrate or explain something, large crowds would gather around, many of the promenaders pressing near to listen to his words. If the Angelus-bell sounded its message from the church-towers of the city, the young men, unabashed by the throng of onlookers, would uncover their heads and devoutly recite the Angelus — truly a novel spectacle for many. Of opposition there was very little heard at this time. As Father Stark wrote to Father Passerat a few days after Hofbauer's death, "a remarkable change of sentiment toward Hofbauer had taken place during the past year. Among all classes reverence for him had visibly increased. . . . The Government no longer viewed the evening gatherings of Hofbauer's youthful disciples with alarm, nor did the police see in them now a secret society plotting against the State, as certain evil-minded people who attacked everything good had openly branded these informal meetings. On the contrary, they beheld in them what they really were, — an undoubted power for good, a support being built up for religion, and a rampart of protection rising about the Austrian throne." "Many respectable and influential persons," he goes on to say, "persons who formerly misunderstood the intentions of our blessed Father and therefore held him in suspicion, now regard him as a man able to stem the tide of unbelief and to drive back the forces

threatening to disturb the peace. The desire to obtain capable priests, trained and directed by Hofbauer, as his candidates have proved themselves, is being expressed even by men who hitherto always advocated the contrary."

The Saint had complied, on June 25, with the Emperor's order to submit the statutes of the Congregation. With his explanations he presented a copy of the Rule. On October 29, he forwarded to His Majesty a literal translation of the Rule in German, together with an explanatory Memorial which interpreted the Rule to meet conditions prevailing in Austria. Darnaut had already made definite proposals to the Emperor for the erection of a Redemptorist House in Vienna, with the result that His Majesty now commissioned the Court-Chaplain Frint, with the co-operation of the Archbishop, to prepare a detailed sketch for the execution of Darnaut's proposals. In order to forestall all objections that might hereafter be urged against the letter of the Rule, Frint induced Hofbauer to recast its form and wording in accordance with his Memorial of October 29. Five weeks later, on December 3, this text of the Rule, adapted to the conditions in Austria, together with additional sketches submitted by Frint and Darnaut, were presented to the Archbishop, who in turn, after affixing the episcopal approbation, handed all these papers to the Emperor. The final sketch of the statutes that was to be submitted for the approbation of His Majesty was prepared by Stifft. The text of this draft Hofbauer probably never got to see.[1]

[1] In the Archiepiscopal Archives in Vienna I found the hitherto undiscovered text of Hofbauer's sketch of the Rule for the Congregation in Austria. Even though this document did not prove of any practical significance, it is nevertheless interesting, as it shows us how Hofbauer pictured to himself the future development of the Congregation in Austria. It embodies two great departures from the original Rule. First, in regard to the Constitution of the Congregation, the Congregation is represented as an independent society. "The head and highest Rector of the Congregation, which declares itself to be entirely independent, without any subjection whatsoever to Superiors outside the realm, is the Vicar-General, who possesses in Austria all the rights of the Superior General or Rector Major." He holds his office for life. Before his death he appoints his successor, or in the event of his not having done so, his successor is elected by the Consultors of the deceased Vicar-General and the Rectors. In virtue of his unlimited authority, the Vicar-General governs the Congregation "entirely independent of the Congregation in Italy and without any connection whatsoever with it." It will readily be understood that Hofbauer was obliged to claim this independent position, if

The mere fact that the Emperor withdrew the entire question from the usual course of official business and confided it to friends and supporters of Hofbauer, was to the Saint the

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he wished to obtain the approbation of the Emperor. This was the all-important point; everything else was secondary. It is self-evident that Hofbauer in this presumed the necessary dispensations and authorization of both the Superior General and the Pope, as he was justified in doing, since these were usually granted under such difficult circumstances. As the Saint frequently assured his disciples, he did not entertain the slightest doubt that they would be granted. His successor, Father Passerat, therefore, on the strength of these extraordinary powers as Vicar-General in Vienna, held about the same position as that which Hofbauer had herein marked out. It was only by degrees that it again became possible to enter into closer relationship with the Superior General. That the Saint did not in any wise contemplate a complete separation of the houses that were expected to arise in Austria from the Congregation in Italy, need scarcely be mentioned. The second departure from the original Rule concerned the sphere of activity in which the Congregation was to move in Austria. According to this sketch, the activities of the Congregation were summed up under the following seven headings: 1) The Public Celebration of the Divine Services; 2) Sermons and Catechetical Instruction; 3) The Hearing of Confessions and the other duties pertaining to the Care of Souls, especially the Care of the Sick; (Hofbauer here mentions particularly that as pastor of Maria-Stiegen, it is not his intention to make this an exclusively national church for the Slavs, but that he will there be quite ready to hold services also for Bohemians, Germans, and Poles, and that furthermore, confessions will be heard there in Italian and Croatian); 4) The Giving of the Spiritual Exercises or so-called Retreats for the reformation of life; 5) Assistance to pastors in the work of the ministry; 6) Primary and Secondary Education; and 7) The Direction of Schools, Colleges, and Orphan Asylums. Concerning the last two points, the sketch declares: "The Congregation is prepared, and by virtue of its statutes is bound, to take charge of elementary and high schools and colleges, in order to promote sound religious and scientific training. In its schools it shall follow strictly the course of instruction prescribed and also provide for the moral and religious training of the young; in its colleges it shall, in accordance with the existing regulations, devote particular attention to a thorough training in the classics and to facility in the use of the Latin tongue. . . . The Congregation does not in any way restrict the scientific pursuits of its members merely to the acquisition of the knowledge necessary to fit them as teachers in the elementary and high schools and colleges. The more capable among them, and those who show a particular aptitude for the higher studies, shall be obliged, should the Government and the Ordinary so require, to devote themselves to advanced studies in the various departments of philosophy and theology, to philosophical and theological literature, and to philology, so as to render themselves fit to act either as teachers of religion at Universities and Colleges, or to contribute, as the needs of the times demand, to theological literature, and thus labor successfully by word, work, and pen to be useful to both Church and State, especially in these days when this assistance is most necessary. The Congregation especially wishes to see true piety combined with profound knowledge." . . . "The Congregation is obliged to devote

surest sign that no further difficulties or serious complications were to be anticipated. Penckler was the first to inform him that the imperial approbation was assured to the Congregation. It was very shortly after the dawn of the New Year of 1820.

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itself in an especial manner to the care of orphans and poor children of the lower classes, and consequently to make due provision for orphans and other needy children in a home or asylum, and to instruct them; this work, however, shall depend upon the means and resources of the Congregation. So far as the room available in its houses will permit, the Congregation shall also accept children as boarders, provided that these children pay a sum proportionate to the expenses incurred for them; and it will enlarge these boarding-schools in as far as the increasing income will make this possible."

The Saint was fully aware that these last two points of his program of activities were in contradiction to the original Rule. In two places in the sketch which he drew up, he refers to this contradiction, and claims that the enlargement of the sphere of the Congregation's activities outside of Italy is justified by circumstances. The giving of missions he held to be impracticable in Austria, and this was really the case in his time. Even until so late as 1848 popular missions could be given only here and there, and then under great difficulties.

Among the men confidentially appointed as judges by the Emperor, — namely, Hohenwart, Frint, and Darnaut, — there was a difference of opinion concerning the new Congregation's sphere of activity, especially with regard to teaching. Hohenwart does not mention the schools at all in his approbation; he considers the Redemptorists merely as assistant priests in the ministry, and proposes to designate them as Assistant-Priests of Maria-Stiegen. Darnaut wished the schools to be excluded entirely, as the Piarists were given to that work. Dr. Frint, on the contrary, wished to employ the Redemptorists principally in educational work, since an object of this kind fitted in with his own ideas. Dr. Frint, as is well known, called into existence, in 1817, the "Higher Educational Institute for Secular Priests," which still bears his name. In the program of this Institute he declares the reformation of priests and educators to be a matter of the most urgent necessity, since no remedy was to be looked for from the existing institutes and colleges for the clergy. On this point Frint and Hofbauer were of one mind. Indeed, at this very time, Father Hofbauer, recurring to an old plan of his, was in consultation with Bauer, then the Army-Bishop, regarding a seminary for army-chaplains. With so narrow a sphere of activity as Hohenwert had in view, the Saint's ardent zeal, embracing as it did the spiritual and temporal needs of all mankind, could not have been satisfied. His special predilection for teaching and instructing, which in this sketch again comes so strongly to the fore, was the very flower of his entire past experience. It is remarkable, that in the sketch which he drew up he mentions as fields best suited to the activities of the Congregation, those countries which were known for their low standard of education, such as Galicia, Bukowina, Siebenbuergen, and Dalmatia.

We cannot doubt what Hofbauer would think of these matters in our day, when altered conditions have again made the giving of missions possible, and when the entire Congregation restricts the principal sphere of its activity to this kind of work and its kindred labors.

Penckler was so overcome with emotion that he could hardly speak when he entered Hofbauer's room to convey the glad tidings. He folded the Saint in an affectionate embrace, unable to say more than, "Father Hofbauer, have a *Te Deum* service held, — we have been victorious!"[2] The *Te Deum* service was celebrated the following day, but behind closed doors. Without delay the Saint took the requisite steps to arrange the details of the new foundation. The most important preliminaries had already been attended to: a number of talented young men from the circle of his disciples were ready to enter the novitiate; and money enough was on hand to cover immediate expenditures. Like a solicitous mother of a family, Hofbauer did not overlook even the most trifling matters. One day Don Pajalich had to help him put some packages of sugar and coffee into the cupboard; while they were thus occupied, Hofbauer remarked to him: "All these will be for our brethren at Maria-Stiegen."

When Moses, after his long wanderings through the desert, looked in rapture from Nebo upon the Promised Land, the Lord said to him: "Thou thyself shalt not enter in." This, too, was the lot of our Saint, after hoping and yearning for well-nigh forty years to behold the Congregation established in Austria. Close at hand, as the fulfilment was, he was quite aware that he would not live to see the realization of his hopes and desires. Repeatedly, during these months, and in the most positive terms, he assured his friends and acquaintances, that the decree admitting the Congregation into Austria would not be signed until he appeared in the presence of God, that after his death many Redemptorist Houses would arise in Austria, and that the Congregation would be spread among many nations. To judge from his remarks, it would appear that the Saint had asked God as a special favor to be permitted to make this last supreme sacrifice — to die without enjoying the fruits of his labors on earth. "Hitherto," he said, "I have received nothing but hatred and mockery. Now honors await me: these I should like to escape. . . ." A few weeks

[2] Nordmann, *The Liguorians* (Vienna, 1849, p. 30). This pamphlet, besides much that is absurd, contains valuable matter taken from the Archives of Maria-Stiegen which were stolen in 1848.

before his death, he remarked to Klinkowstroem that it was now time for him to go back to Tivoli to weep over his past sins.

It was surely to some supernatural light that he owed this positive knowledge of his approaching death. But even the state of his health of late was such as to warn him that the end of his pilgrimage could not be far distant. His former strength and vigor were irretrievably gone, although his outward appearance gave no indication that his physical powers were waning. In spite of the little food he took, he seemed to be stout rather than spare. His hair was only slightly tinged with gray. However, in a few insignificant details he was now somewhat less rigorous in his manner of living. He now consented to take a little glass of wine, celebrated Holy Mass at an earlier hour than had been his custom, and sometimes partook of a slight refection in the course of the morning. This refreshment, however, was always taken in a great hurry: without laying aside his surplice, he would leave his confessional for a moment, go into the convent-kitchen, take a morsel of food, and then return at once to his work. There were no other deviations from his usual routine. As Don Pajalich correctly remarks, Hofbauer now would have profited by having a Superior to oblige him to spare his strength. But such a one was not at hand, and hence the inevitable happened — the restless zeal of the Saint consumed the remnant of his physical energy in a short time. A letter of Father Stark's to Father Passerat, dated November 22, 1819, reveals the departures that had to be made in the regular order of the day at the Seiler Place. It was written at three o'clock in the morning. "I am going to bed now," he wrote, "Father Hofbauer is spending the night with Count Széchényi." The aged Count was very ill at this time. In addition to the affliction of the eyes from which he had suffered for years, he was now a victim of heart-trouble. He awaited death with truly Christian fortitude and resignation. He collaborated with a musician of Vienna in composing the Requiem Mass to be sung at his obsequies, and even attended a rehearsal for it. For hours now Hofbauer sat by the bedside of the invalid. When other visitors came and the conversation drifted to purely

worldly matters, the Saint usually fell into a quiet slumber in his chair. Széchényi admitted to Archbishop Fischer, of Erlau, on the occasion of a visit from the prelate, that he owed solely to the prayers of this saintly priest, whatever alleviation heaven had vouchsafed him in his painful condition.

Hofbauer, however, was to go to his grave several months in advance of the Count. In the course of this winter, his final illness, a malignant form of hemorrhoids, developed, probably in consequence of the many hours he daily spent in the confessional. Twice during the winter he was striken with a severe attack, which left him in a state of fever and delirium; and more than once an unbroken trail of blood marked the way he had gone from his house to the church.

In February, 1820, it became evident to all that his condition was one of intense suffering. Unfortunately, Father Stark fell seriously ill of typhoid fever at the same time, so that the Saint was obliged to carry the burden of his assistant's work as well as his own. The last sacraments were administered to Father Stark, but the Saint remarked: "I am in a worse condition than he: he will recover, but I shall die soon, very soon." An attack of chills and fever, which prostrated the Saint on Saturday evening, March 4, left no more room for doubt that he was not far removed from some serious illness. Those who had gathered at his house that evening wished to depart earlier than was their wont, but Hofbauer would not permit them, saying that it mattered little whether he retired a little sooner or later. The next day he appeared in the pulpit for the last time. His last sermon was an earnest exhortation on the good use of time, "for," he said, "the night cometh when no man can work any more, and as the tree falleth, so it shall lie for all eternity." He performed his usual round of duties on the two following days. On Wednesday, March 8, from 9.00 until 10.30 A.M., he was at his post hearing the confessions of the Ursuline nuns. Sitting caused him untold agony, so that he endeavored to hear the confessions standing. "My whole body," he told one of the nuns, "pains and throbs like an inflamed finger." In spite of his condition, however, he did not try to hurry the nuns in their confessions. Sister Frances declared in the Process of

Beatification that he kept her at this last confession to him for half an hour, giving her detailed instructions and advice regarding certain matters and situations that arose only years afterward. Before leaving the convent, he called for Sister Thaddea, who had had no opportunity to go to confession that morning. He would not go without bidding his faithful penitent farewell. He left her with the words: "Pray hard for me, for I am very ill." Just at this time news of the death of the Princess Theresa Jablonowska arrived from Rome. Her children, who resided in Vienna, begged the Saint to offer a Solemn High Mass of Requiem in the Italian Church on March 9, for the repose of her soul. He had not the heart to refuse this request, especially as he felt strong enough to comply with it. The next morning, Thursday, March 9, accordingly, he went on foot to the Italian Church, accompanied by Don Pajalich. Here he celebrated Mass for the last time; but it was evident to his assistants, Pajalich and Madlener, that he had overrated his strength, and that the Holy Sacrifice he offered to God, was also a personal sacrifice of gratitude on the altar of friendship. Toward the end of the Solemn Requiem, the Saint suddenly became weak and his countenance took on the ashen pallor of a dying person. It was with the greatest difficulty that he was able to complete the sacred functions. Baron Penckler ordered a carriage to convey him to his home, where he was immediately put to bed. Dr. Emmanuel Veith was the attending physician. The disease assumed a very painful character, as a general inflamation set in and extended over all the lower organs. The Saint, Dr. Veith tells us, readily submitted to whatever treatment was necessary, "though it was evident that from modesty he did so only with the greatest reluctance." The friends and admirers who surrounded his bedside wavered between hope and fear until Sunday, March 12. At times his condition seemed to show improvement. There was, of course, no lack of faithful care and proper attention. It became necessary to forbid the well-meant visits of his friends and benefactors, lest the patient be too much disturbed. He insisted, however, that some of his more scrupulous penitents be admitted to his bedside to make their confession and to receive his advice in regard to the choice of a

new spiritual director. He continued to be fully conscious during these days, and exchanged many a friendly word with his disciples. On one occasion he grasped Madlener's hand, and pressing it to his heart, said: "My dear Madlener, many secrets are going to the grave with me. I should like to confide them to you, but you cannot hold your tongue." Marianne, the out-servant of the Ursulines, who came over frequently to inquire about the Saint's condition, was inconsolable. During one of these visits Hofbauer suddenly said to her: "Marianne, do not weep; you will soon follow me." The faithful servant, who was in perfect health at the time, died quite unexpectedly eleven days later. On Monday, March 13, the Saint's illness took a fatal turn, the disease having developed into typhoid and black smallpox. Dr. Veith pronounced the condition of the patient hopeless. From now on he lay silent, his head somewhat inclined on his folded hands and turned toward the wall. In this position he remained until the end. Hitherto, it seems, it had not occurred to any one to administer the last Sacraments to him. His friends appeared to have lost their heads completely. As he had offered the Holy Sacrifice even when he was so very ill, some now hesitated to interrupt him in his prayer or to disturb his rest. Finally, Dr. Madlener ventured to ask him: "Father Hofbauer, do you want to receive God?" The question was an infelicitous one; so undogmatically expressed, it seemed to annoy him. He raised himself up, and said, "The Holy Communion? Yes, yes!" Accordingly, on Tuesday morning, Dr. Francis Schmid administered the last Sacraments to the dying Saint. His friends had postponed this last duty to their revered Father a little too long. He had moments of delirium, during which his mind wandered from the sacred rites. He endeavored to repeat the words of absolution, as if he himself were the confessor. Dr. Veith spent the night with his patient. Holy Communion was again brought to him in the course of the night. After receiving the Viaticum, he softly whispered, "*Intellexi communionem,*" — by which words he probably wished to assure his friends that he was fully conscious and realized that he had received the Blessed Eucharist. On awaking at about six o'clock in the morning

of March 15, smiling with all the winsome friendliness of a child, he tried with a dying voice to recite the verses of the favorite hymn with which he had been accustomed from childhood to begin his daily work: "To Thy honor and glory, Lord, Tend my every thought and work and word." At this same hour Madame Bieringer had a dream. Clearly and distinctly, as in a vision, she saw Hofbauer enter, take a seat on the sofa, and heard him making inquiries about certain family affairs. Then he began to complain bitterly about the unbelief of the public officials. Finally, he said three times, "I am going now to my solitude!" and with these words he disappeared. Shortly after this, her daughter came in weeping with the news that Hofbauer lay in his last agony. Still, the mysterious announcement of his approaching death filled the anxious family with a sensible consolation and holy joy.

In the course of the morning his friends began to flock to the death-chamber. His nephew, Anthony Priesching, the former novice at St. Benno's, had also hastened from Iglau to his bedside. Hofbauer had written him personally to come at once, if he wished to see him once more in this life. At eleven o'clock Dr. Francis Schmid began to recite the prayers for the dying. Dr. Veith, Werner, Madlener, and Don Pajalich stood around the bed. The noon hour was approaching. Quite perceptibly Hofbauer breathed the words: "Pray! The Angelus-bell is ringing!" And while those around him were on their knees, saluting the Blessed Mother of God, Hofbauer gave up his soul to his Maker. A life precious in the sight of heaven and earth had closed. At the moment of his death, the serene, peaceful expression which had been clouded by the anguish of his last illness, returned to illumine his lifeless features.

The first impressions produced by his death among his friends and admirers varied considerably; there was deep sorrow as well as holy joy. The Ursulines were at dinner, when Marianne, who had knelt at the bedside of the dying Saint, came in with the news of his death. "All wept and sobbed," Sister Thaddea tells us; "no one could eat. The community left the table immediately and went to the church." Dr. Francis Schmid, on the other hand, broke the news to his

sister, Frau Guszl, the wife of the master-baker, with words that seemed to announce tidings of great joy: "Rejoice, sister, rejoice," he said to her; "all these years you have been giving bread to a Saint!" The Papal Nuncio Leardi wrote to Consalvi: "Good Father Hofbauer went to his eternal reward this morning. . . . All the well-disposed are in the greatest consternation over the removal of one so long a pillar of strength in the cause of truth and right. It is impossible to replace him."

Before night had descended upon that memorable day, the Congregation of the Redemptorists was formally approved by law in the Austrian Empire. Marvelous disposition of Divine Providence! On the very day of the Saint's death, the decree legally admitting the Congregation into Vienna was signed by the Emperor. With a literalness that could not be accounted for in a natural way, the prophecy uttered by the Saint had gone into fulfilment. On the morning of the following day, March 16, the Imperial Decree itself arrived, and was placed on the dead body of the Saint.[3]

Hofbauer's remains, clad in the plain, poor garments in which he had so often passed through the streets of Vienna, were laid out in one of the chaplain's rooms on the first floor, which happened to be vacant at the time. Madame Mueller, the wife of one of the Court Counselors, testified that the stockings which were put on the corpse had been mended with small pieces of leather. "From the moment the blessed remains were laid out until the hour of the burial," Augusta von Mengershausen wrote to Dorothy Schlegel, who was still in Rome, "the chaplain's room was constantly filled with people who came to kneel and pray beside the bier. They tried to kiss the hem of his garments, for they did not consider themselves worthy to kiss his hands." The Countess Széchényi, inconsolable as she viewed the dead form of the Saint, did not cease to cover his cold hands with her kisses and her tears. To those who warned her of the danger of contagion, she replied: "The Saints do not spread contagion." Toward evening Chaplain Rinn, a gifted artist, who later became a Jesuit,

[3] From Schlegel's letter to Dorothy, dated March 18, 1820, and quoted below.

came to pay his last tribute of affection to the deceased. Kneeling at the foot of the bier, he drew a sketch of the head and face of his departed master, and wrote under the finished copy the significant words of Ecclesiasticus: "Blessed are they that saw thee, and were honored with thy friendship." (xlviii, II.) [4]

The obsequies were to have been held on Friday, March 17, but owing to the contagious nature of the disease of which Hofbauer died, they were ordered to take place already on Thursday evening, March 16. At noon on that day, the watchmaker Kaufmann, a friend of Hofbauer's, inquired of the butcher who supplied St. Ursula's with meat, what preparations had been made. He was told that as yet nothing had been arranged. Kaufmann went away saddened and deeply depressed by the thought that such a man should be carried to the grave without any ceremony. Although in straitened circumstances himself, he purchased a few candles and planned to accompany the corpse with some friends. In the meantime other friends of the Saint had quietly and of their own accord made other preparations. According to some, it was Count Széchényi, according to others, Louis Grachenfels, a wealthy merchant of Budapest and one of Hofbauer's most enthusiastic disciples, that took a special interest in arranging the funeral services. Musicians and a choir were engaged, and hundreds of candles bought to be distributed among those who wished to take part in the funeral procession. Permis-

[4] Of this picture, Schlegel wrote two days later to his wife Dorothy: "One of his disciples, Father Rinn, who is an expert draughtsman, made a picture of him, which one cannot behold without being deeply moved, and which must by all means be multiplied by lithograph or in some other way." This sketch was later reproduced in lithograph by Louis Schnorr, of Carolsfeld. This portrait is the original from which most of the pictures of Hofbauer in circulation have been reproduced; hence the somewhat stern expression of countenance. Rinn made another picture of the Saint during his lifetime, but, strange to say, this earlier portrait remained unknown to many until quite recent times. A reproduction of it is given as the frontispiece of the second edition of Innerkofler's *Life* of the Saint, as also of this work. Ritter von Unkhrechtsberg, a disciple of Hofbauer's, wrote to the artist, Ritter von Fuehrich, in 1868, concerning this picture, that, according to his recollection, it unmistakably represents the Saint as he looked about five years before his death. "The impression which this portrait made upon me, when I first beheld it," he adds, "was most surprising. The only fault I find with it is, that the hair is a trifle too short and gray."

sion was likewise obtained to throw open the main portals of the Cathedral of St. Stephen's, though at first the church officials flatly refused the petition, as this was never done except at the burial of persons of distinction. But these external circumstances formed the least remarkable part of the celebration of the obsequies. What made an overpowering impression upon all those who witnessed this funeral service, was the unexpected participation of the rank and file of Vienna's inhabitants. Not merely a few friends and admirers, but all Vienna turned out to act as the last escort of their apostle to the tomb. About two o'clock that afternoon the people began to stream into St. John's Street and Seiler Place. Toward four o'clock, the clergy arrived — secular priests, Servites, Mechitarists, Augustinians, soon to be followed by the seminarians who marched in a body from the Archiepiscopal Seminary. No one knew who had given them the order to attend, so that there was some trouble afterward with the Directorate of the Seminary. The nobility came in carriages. Count Széchényi, who was seriously ill, sent his coach of state with two Hungarian hussars. At four o'clock Dr. Francis Schmid pronounced the final absolution at the entrance of the house. The Ursuline nuns were permitted to open the windows of their convent and look on. "We beheld an endless sea of humanity," declares Sister Thaddea; "everybody was weeping, especially we, the daughters of St. Ursula. In the throng were many women with children in their arms, and mothers and children were weeping." Twelve of the disciples of Hofbauer, for the most part, students of the University, then raised the coffin on their shoulders, and as they bore their precious burden, others walked beside with torches in their hands. The funeral procession now moved forward, proceeding a short distance down St. John's Street, into Kaertner Street, which led to the Cathedral of St. Stephen. Here the second absolution was to be given, to be followed by the temporary burial in the vault. All traffic in this busy section of the city had to be suspended, as dense throngs lined the streets on both sides, watching the funeral procession as it passed along. As if under orders, the endless streams of people poured through the side streets, although no such command or invitation had been given. Be-

tween two solid walls of spectators the simple but extremely impressive cortege was now formed. Immediately after the coffin there followed as chief mourners Pilat, Adam Mueller, and Klinkowstroem; next came an almost endless line of women, young and old, led by Countess Széchényi and Lady Augusta von Mengershausen. It was gradually growing dark, for it was a dreary, rainy afternoon; and the gloomy atmosphere notably added to the impressiveness of the long procession of burning tapers. A solemn, reverential silence reigned all about, broken only by the sound of the sadly-beautiful music, the doleful hymns, and the sighs and sobs of the poor who mourned the loss of their father. Very remarkable was the presence of so many soldiers and invalided war-veterans, to whom the Saint had been a kind friend and benefactor.

After the arrival of the funeral procession, the spacious Cathedral was crowded to its utmost capacity. Dr. Veith, who viewed the seething mass of humanity from the sanctuary, declares that there was hardly any room to move. Many could not gain admission at all. This was, indeed, more than an ordinary funeral. Very many persons, who had been borne along by the stream of people, asked what it all meant. Numberless candles burned on all the altars of the sacred edifice. "A great throng of school-children," wrote Augusta von Mengershausen in the letter to Dorothy just quoted, "sang such lovely hymns, that I imagined I was in heaven listening to the angels." In a voice tremulous with emotion as he recited the prayers, Werner pronounced the final absolution.

On the following morning the remains were taken from the vault of St. Stephen's and borne by carriage to the cemetery of Maria-Enzersdorf, about twelve miles from Vienna. Here, in the pilgrimage-church of the Franciscans at Maria-Enzersdorf, the more intimate of the Saint's friends and acquaintances met again to lay upon the grave of their beloved father the last sad tribute of their tears and affection. Werner chanted the Requiem Mass. It was nearing the noon-hour as the remains were buried beside the grave of the memorable Father Albert Diesbach, as such had been the wish of the Saint. The inscription on the stone cross placed over the grave eloquently summed up the fruitful life of this great

modern apostle in the words: "*Fidelis servus et prudens.*" — "A faithful and prudent servant."

The obsequies closed with the celebration of Requiem services in St. Ursula's Church, on March 23, the eighth day after his death. Grachenfels had previously had the church artistically draped. Professor Ackermann conducted the sacred functions.

CHAPTER X

HOFBAUER CONTINUES TO LIVE IN THE CONGREGATION AND IN THE CHURCH

ON March 19, two days after the earthly remains of the Saint had been lowered into the grave at Maria-Enzersdorf, Frederick Schlegel wrote to Dorothy, who was still in Rome. "My dear wife," he says in the course of this letter, "I come now to the principal and most important point of my letter. Scarcely have I received your letter in reference to the death of dear Theresa (Princess Jablonowska), when I am obliged in turn to announce another loss which will shock you and cause you even greater pain. For, even if one has already been forced to think that such an event might occur, yet now that it has actually happened, one feels more keenly the great loss which we have sustained. You will miss another dear and cherished person here; you will no longer find our good and fatherly old friend and guide among us. Perhaps you have already heard of the death of Father Hofbauer, an event which I had often thought nearer than it really was. Ostini reported it to Rome late on the last post-day, and you may have heard the news through him. It was for this reason that I did not write to you by the last post. For, as I received only on that morning the news that there was no longer any hope, I was just as little inclined to conceal or keep from you that which occupied my whole mind and stirred my whole soul to its very depths, as I was to make known the real truth to you before it had actually come to pass. I received the news while I was at dinner with Pilat, Mueller and Job at Palfy's, and after it I had neither the time nor the self-command to write to you. The dear old man had been ailing all through the winter, although apparently not more than on former occasions. But for several weeks past his disciple and attending physician, Dr. Veith, found his condition serious. He took no medicine, nor did he spare himself. . . .

"The funeral was to have taken place yesterday afternoon, on which occasion one of his disciples was to have delivered the funeral oration; but the nature of the disease that snatched him from us, made it necessary that he be buried on the evening of the 16th. Despite the fact that this change in the arrangements was not known in advance, everything that was due to so extraordinary a man was ready, as if so ordered. I met the funeral procession accidentally in Kaertner Street and accompanied it to the Church. Whether I consider the deep emotion that it evoked, or the solemn quiet with which it was conducted, or the mass of humanity that took part in it, I have never seen a more impressive and beautiful funeral in Vienna. Near me a man came out of a store, and when he saw the procession, the solemnity of which would have impressed anybody, he remarked: 'This must surely have been a very rich man!' In this, although in a quite different sense, he was perfectly right.

"The coffin was borne by the young men who generally came to visit him: after them walked the clergy, led by Werner, and then the rest. In spite of the malignant disease of which he died, his countenance in death wore a remarkably serene and beautiful expression, seeming as if aglow with love. . . .

"My mind has been so preoccupied with this mournful occurrence these days that I can scarcely think of anything else. What his followers will now do we shall see; in the meantime, all we can do is to wait and watch developments. In some of these matters I have different views from the rest, who, as in the case of an earthly inheritance, would at once divide the rich earnings of a lifetime, and, like busy little ants, carry off and consume everything. For the present I shall continue to abide with the simple thought: A great, a saintly man has been taken from us, and I see nothing ahead but a great chasm yawning at my feet."

What Dorothy Schlegel herself, after her return to Vienna, wrote to her sons in Rome, on July 13, well expresses the sentiments of many of the admirers of the deceased. "What I have lost here," she writes, "or rather, what we have all lost, for it is unjust and selfish to regard it as a mere personal

loss, — and what all of us shall look for in vain as long as we live is our dear, dear spiritual Father. I dare not speak of it, for my heart seems to burst when I speak of this soul, and realize that I shall miss him now in this life, which at the best offers but little joy." [1] The dread feeling that a man whom it would be hard to replace had been lost, now seized upon all who had learned to know and appreciate him. Sebastian Job concluded a course of Spiritual Exercises at the Salesian Nuns' on the day of the Saint's funeral. In his closing address he urgently exhorted the Nuns to beseech the Lord to send laborers into His vineyard; "for, yesterday," he said, "God dealt us a severe blow by calling to Himself the Apostle of Vienna, the Pillar of the Diocese. Beseech Him to compensate us for this loss. . . ." The Emperor, on hearing the news of his death, said: "I am doubly sorry; I grieve for myself and for my people, and I grieve for the entire Church; for he was a Pillar of the Church." The younger Pilat was in Rome at the time with Baron von Bucholtz, and received the news of Hofbauer's death from the lips of Consalvi. Pilat declared that the news of the Saint's death caused consternation in the College of Cardinals.

The disciples of the Saint now rallied around Dr. Madlener, whom they looked upon as the logical successor of their deceased master. Madlener, after his ordination, had been assigned to a chaplaincy at St. Augustine's Church next to the Castle. The Court-chaplain Darnaut and Zaengerle also took a lively interest in the young men. Their evening gatherings were held with Darnaut at the Castle and at Madlener's. Their chief anxiety that the establishment of the Congregation in Vienna might now be halted, if not entirely frustrated, soon proved to be groundless. Although the Emperor had determined to establish the foundation in Vienna as a personal tribute to Hofbauer, he now declared that the foundation should be erected nevertheless, and he manifested great interest in the zealous candidates who wished to devote their lives to the Congregation. On April 18, these candidates, in a special memorial to His Majesty, begged permission to begin the novitiate at once, without awaiting the completion of

[1] Eckardt, *Hofbauer*, p. 52.

the repairs at Maria-Stiegen. The list of those who had resolved to enter the Congregation contained thirty-two names: nine co-operators, or curates; fifteen theologians of the four years' courses, the most of whom were former students of law or medicine; one student of philosophy, three officials, one officer, and three tradesmen. Ten of these declared themselves ready to begin the novitiate at once; the others were still detained for a time in their respective positions. The next day, April 19, the Emperor issued an official order, declaring it to be his will that the Congregation be established in Vienna, and ordering a part of the Passau Court at Maria-Stiegen cleared and made ready for this purpose. In the meantime it was left to the option of the petitioners to begin the novitiate in another place. The candidates were given a hospitable reception in the Convent of the Franciscans, which at the time numbered only three or four inmates. Here, on Pentecost Sunday, the first six novices entered: Don Pajalich, the theologians Springer, Pruegel, Unkhrechtsberg, DeHeld, and Kosmaczek. On the following day, Father Stark invested them provisionally with the habit. The novitiate was officially opened on August 2. Everything went along well. On August 9, Father Stark was able to report to Father Passerat: "Our novices are humble, obedient, and fervent; they are very much attached to the Congregation, for which they show such an affection, that they are truly an example to every old Redemptorist. God reward our blessed Father for all his labors and efforts in behalf of the Congregation, for it is to him that we owe these blessed results; but even if he were still living, matters could not go better. . . . Your Reverence will be pleased, I am sure, to see these good children." He was able to report likewise that a second house, somewhere in the country-districts, had been offered them before they had even taken possession of the first. Father General had, on May 20, appointed Father Passerat as the successor of Father Hofbauer. After the foundation in Alsace (Bischenberg), for which negotiations had been going on for several years, had finally been secured — it was opened on August 2 — the new Vicar-General set out for Vienna, where he arrived on October 20. The Government readily and without question acknowl-

edged him as the Superior. In the meantime the necessary repairs in the church and house were completed. On December 23, a well-laden wagon, accompanied by the novices, whose number had increased to fifteen, drove from the Franciscan Convent to Maria-Stiegen. On the same day the church and house were solemnly given over to the Community. The Imperial Commissary directing this function in the name of the Government was none other than the Canon and Counselor at Court, Augustine Braig — but with what sentiments he presided on this occasion we cannot learn from the documents! Archbishop Hohenwart had departed this life on July 20; consequently it was the Coadjutor Bishop Steindl that, on Christmas Eve, reconsecrated the sacred edifice which for years had been debased to profane uses. Regular divine services in the magnificent church began on Christmas Day. The new Redemptorist community in Vienna developed very rapidly. The Congregation, hitherto unknown in Austria, exercised a great power of attraction. This was due principally to the name and fame of Hofbauer. Nearly all the postulants during the first few years came from the circle of his disciples; his friends and admirers were the persons who, as new foundations were established, contributed the necessary funds. One year after its foundation, Maria-Stiegen numbered almost forty members, including the novices; as many, therefore, as had been expelled from St. Benno's, in 1808. The catalogue for 1827 contains the names of sixty-eight members for Maria-Stiegen and the additional foundations which had in the meantime been acquired at Lisbon, Frohnleiten, Mautern and Innsbruck, the personnel in each instance being supplied by Maria-Stiegen. To this number must be added at least thirty in Alsace and Switzerland, where, in 1828, the unhealthy foundation at Valsainte was exchanged for the beautiful establishment at Friburg. The Austrian laws, it is true, still placed many obstacles in the way. Communication with Italy was extremely difficult. Father General Mansione had given the new Vicar-General the most extensive faculties, so as to place him in a position to satisfy the demands of the Government and to rule independently of foreign Superiors. But it was felt in Vienna that a closer contact with the parent-Con-

gregation was a neccessity precisely at this time when the Transalpine branch was developing so rapidly. Accordingly, Father Passerat, in 1823, deputed Father Springer to go to Naples. He remained in Italy an entire year, staying for a time now in this and now in that House, in order to observe and imbibe the spirit and customs that obtained there. No delegates could be sent from Austria to the General Chapter in 1824. But at the next General Chapter, in 1832, it was possible, with the permission of the Emperor, to have such a representation. At that Chapter the Transalpine Congregation was represented by six disciples of Hofbauer's. In regard to the sphere of activity of the newly-founded Transalpine Congregation, affairs developed in a manner essentially different from what Hofbauer had planned and desired. According to the Statutes, the Redemptorists in Austria would have been obliged to take over Schools, Colleges, Orphan Asylums and Houses of Correction at any time that the Government might have so demanded. But this never happened. Father Král in his reminiscences of Hofbauer asks the question: What would have taken place had the Saint lived for a number of years longer and governed the Congregation? He is of the opinion that in view of the pressing needs of the Church and the ardent zeal and all-embracing energetic spirit of Hofbauer, "the Congregation would most likely have become quite different from what St. Alphonsus intended it to be when he laid its foundations. But that was not to be. St. Alphonsus was mightier than Father Hofbauer; wherefore, Father Hofbauer was summoned from this world, and the Congregation gradually returned to the path mapped out for it by St. Alphonsus." In this assertion there is not contained the least censure of Vienna's great apostle or the least aspersion on his character. The instruments chosen by Divine Providence have a special task assigned to them, and only in so far as they subject themselves to the will of God in their regard, do they receive assistance from on high. Hofbauer was the pioneer chosen to prepare the way for the Congregation. That was his task. The work that was to follow devolved upon others.

It was Father Passerat, that for almost thirty years, as

Vicar-General of the Transalpine Congregation, guarded and richly increased the heritage of the Saint. With his own eyes he saw fulfilled the prophecy of the Saint, that many Houses of the Congregation would arise among the different nations. In the early thirties, the Congregation was established in Belgium, and from there it was introduced into Holland. At the same time Father Passerat, in keeping with one of the long-cherished plans of the Saint, sent his first missionaries to North America, among their number, Father Francis Haetscher. In the forties, the Redemptorists settled in Bavaria and England, and established new foundations in France. The revolutionary upheaval that rocked Europe toward the middle of the century resulted in sad set-backs in various places; thus, for example, the Congregation was temporarily banished not merely from Austria and Bavaria, but also from Switzerland. In 1848, Father Passerat resigned from office. Shortly afterward the Vicariate for the Transalpine branch was abolished, and the entire Congregation, now divided into Provinces, was placed under the immediate government of the Superior General, who, since 1855, has made Rome his place of residence. As the Holy See did not succeed in gaining over the King of Naples to this plan of reorganization, which had become necessary, a new split was temporarily caused, which placed the Neapolitan and Sicilian Houses in the abnormal position of being Redemptorists outside the aggregate body of the Congregation. But conditions had changed materially since the first split, during which Hofbauer and Huebl had entered the Congregation. The new separation into two groups did not now mean a crisis for the Congregation, as in those days. Its center of gravity now lay outside of Italy.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer increased still more rapidly. The Houses in Austria, Bavaria, Italy, France, Belgium, Holland, England and North America grew in number. New fields of labor were acquired in Ireland, Scotland, Spain, Australia, and in most of the South American Republics. In more recent times mission-stations have been established in Denmark, the West Indies, Mexico, the Belgian Congo, South Africa, and the Philippine Islands. During the last year of the World

War, a second Province was established in Canada, and in the Antilles, a second Vice-Province. Finally, in 1918, after an exile of one hundred and ten years, the Redemptorists returned to Warsaw.[2] There exist at present twenty Provinces and sixteen Vice-Provinces. The latest General Catalogue (1922) records two hundred and seventy-nine Houses and more than four thousand six hundred members.

The ardent wish of the baker-apprentice of Znaim, to be able to do great things for God, has been realized in a manner he little expected. That which Hofbauer dreamed of while he labored and spent himself for souls, and that which he attempted amid difficulties which would have repulsed a less fearless man, — namely, to send a great host of missionaries of his Congregation out into all the world, has been accomplished, and chiefly through him. The spread of the Congregation outside of Italy is principally his work. Valsainte and Maria-Stiegen became the starting-points not only of many new foundations, but of most of the Provinces as well. God, indeed, is able of stones to raise up children to Abraham. But considering the historical development of the Congregation as it lies before us, we must admit that without Hofbauer's life-work, the Redemptorists would probably long ago have shared the fate of so many small Congregations of the eighteenth century, which are to-day hardly known even by name. Hofbauer deserves not only the title of the Great Propagator of the Congregation (*Insignis Propagator*), but he may without hesitation be called its Second Founder.

It is not necessary to add here a summary of the inner life of Hofbauer. The Church has already spoken its final word in this matter by his Beatification and Canonization. That is to say: In virtue of its infallible teaching authority, the Church has declared that John Clement Maria Hofbauer practised all the theological and moral virtues in a heroic degree during his earthly life, and now enjoys the beatific vision of God. That he would be canonized was asserted even before his earthly remains had been consigned to the grave. Professor Ziegler, shortly after the Saint's death, reproached the

[2] An earlier attempt to return to Warsaw (1906–1910) failed on account of Russian intolerance.

disciples of the Saint for their tardiness in administering to him the Sacraments of the dying. "This may cause difficulties," he told them, "when there will be question of his Beatification." People found it difficult to pray for him; they found it easier to pray to him. Striking instances of prayers answered, and undeniable miracles performed through his intercession, confirmed and increased his reputation for sanctity. His grave at Maria-Enzersdorf became a place of pilgrimage. The grave-digger made quite a neat sum, in the way of gratuities, by opening the gates of the cemetery for the many visitors who came to pray at his tomb. In the Process of Beatification he testified, "that he saw men and women of all conditions visit the grave; some prayed for hours at the grave; others plucked the flowers and the grass that grew upon it, and carried some of the earth away with them; others brought flowers and wreaths to decorate the grave."

But several decades passed before the Church conferred upon him those honors which it holds in its possession to bestow upon its children. Several of his intimate friends and co-laborers went to their graves in the meantime, and many of these sought their final resting-place by his side in the cemetery at Maria-Enzersdorf. "In the southeastern part of the cemetery, on the Epistle-side of the Penckler mortuary chapel, an actual colony of dead had been formed. The visitor will not behold here any imposing monuments. He will find only plain tombstones surmounted by the Cross, the sign of the world's Redemption. But the names of the dead whose mouldering remains lie in the graves beneath, will meet his gaze — names which have achieved an almost monumental fame in the history of the civilization and culture in Austria."[3] Here were gradually gathered together Louisa von Klinkowstroem, in 1821; in 1823, Frederick Werner, to whom the Saint revealed in a dream his approaching dissolution, as Werner himself, shortly before his death, revealed to his hearers in the course of one of his sermons; in 1829, Adam Mueller, who had died from apoplexy in the arms of Klinkowstroem, just as he had received the news from Dresden of the sudden death of Frederick Schlegel. In 1830, there followed

[3] Klinkowstroem, p. 397.

the founder of this colony of the dead, Baron von Penckler, who had almost attained his eightieth year; in 1835, Frederick von Klinkowstroem, who in the prime of manhood was snatched away by a malignant disease all too soon from his children and from the Institute that bore his name. He rests at the feet of his wife. Ernest Jarcke (1852), Francis von Bucholz, Joseph von Pilat (1865), Muench-Bellinghausen, and many of their relatives and friends also chose their final resting-place here. "Indeed a Convention of Notables among the dead; a real foregathering of the very leaders of genuine Catholic culture."

In the spring of 1847, Hofbauer's grave was opened. It was the ardent wish of his admirers to bury in a more befitting manner the blessed remains which had hitherto rested in the earth. The grave was lined with masonry, and the remains, which were still well preserved, were placed in a new coffin. The biretta and the stole were in a remarkable state of preservation, while the rest of the garments had almost entirely mouldered away. These insignia of his priestly labors were carried to Maria-Stiegen as precious relics, but were lost in the disturbances of the year 1848. Again years elapsed before the Process of Beatification was taken up in earnest. Only in 1859, in an interview between the Prince-Archbishop Cardinal Rauscher and Father Nicholas Mauron, the General of the Redemptorists, was it finally decided upon to take definite steps toward that end. A new delay set in, however, owing to the outbreak of war between Austria and Italy. In the meantime the plan long-cherished by the Transalpine Provinces, of giving their Founder a worthy burial-place, was realized. The Provinces shared the expenses of the work. A sarcophagus of stone, erected on the Gospel-side, in the sanctuary of the Church of Maria-Stiegen now received the precious relics. The lid of Carrara marble, the work of Joseph Gasser, represents the Saint lying on a bed of state. The sketch that Frederick Rinn had made at the bier on the day of Hofbauer's death, served Gasser as a model. According to Rinn's own opinion, the sculptor succeeded admirably in reproducing the Saint's features. "Yes!" exclaimed Rinn, on beholding it, "exactly thus he lay before me in the open

coffin, as a victorious, triumphant priestly hero, with the calm and clear expression of holy joy upon his countenance over his rich harvest of souls for eternity!"[4] On November 3, 1882, Hofbauer took leave of his friends in Maria-Enzersdorf. The wish that he had so often expressed, to celebrate the Resurrection there, will not, therefore, be fulfilled. On the evening of November 4, he took possession of his Church of Maria-Stiegen. The hearse bearing the heavy zinc coffin passed slowly through a dense multitude of people until it reached the Church. Here at the main entrance, among a large gathering of the clergy, stood some of the surviving disciples of the Saint. Their high privilege it was to bear the precious remains of their master on their shoulders into the sacred edifice. On the following day Cardinal Rauscher celebrated the Pontifical Requiem Mass, and the Jesuit Father Staffler preached the sermon.

At the beginning of the year 1864, finally, the Process of Beatification was inaugurated under the direction of the Army-Bishop Dr. Dominic Mayer. The various fears that had been entertained for its success, proved entirely groundless. In all the territory in which the German language was spoken there had been no Process of this nature for almost a century. Those connected with the conduct of the proceedings had no experience in this kind of work. Nevertheless, the Sacred Congregation of Rites declared that from the formal point of view the Hofbauer Process was a classic. Anxiety had been felt likewise with regard to securing witnesses, the most of whom had already died; yet an abundance of biographical detail was forthcoming. Of the thirty principal witnesses to his life and virtues, all but one had been his personal friends and disciples. Some of them came from a great distance. The aged Father Cech came from France, and dear old Father Pilat came from Belgium, declaring that he would have come even if he had to beg his way on foot to Vienna. Father Madlener, now well on in years and infirm, came from Prague. Joseph von Pilat, of the Government Council, was still living, and cheerfully gave his testimony. The old gentleman, even

[4] K. Dilgskron, *Geschichte der Kirche U. L. Frau am Gestade zu Wien* (Vienna, 1882.), p. 187.

in his advanced years and in the worst weather, still went to Maria-Stiegen every week to confession. The chief witness, however, was Dr. Emmanuel Veith, Canon and Preacher at St. Stephen's. The Commission of Investigation somehow anticipated that they would have trouble with the inexorable critic. How completely were they undeceived! While Father Madlener, broken by age and infirmity, experienced the greatest difficulty from his failing memory, Dr. Veith, although at other times complaining much about his failing memory, now related his reminiscences in fluent language and with much animation: the image of his master stood out clearly and vividly before him; he had only to read from it line by line. Although he had been associated with the Saint only a little more than two years, none of the witnesses gave so clear an account of him.

In 1867, Hofbauer was declared "Venerable." The examination of the miracles ascribed to his intercession took a few years longer. On January 29, 1888, finally, the Beatification took place at St. Peter's in Rome. Just a century had elapsed since Hofbauer had begun his apostolic career at St. Benno's. This first day of great honors which the Church prepared for him on earth is described by an eye-witness. "Long before ten o'clock a great mass of humanity was waiting for admission at the Porta di Bronzo, to the right of the main portals of St. Peter's. Scarcely were the doors thrown open when the magnificent hall, set apart especially for the solemnities of Beatification and Canonization, and itself as large as a good-sized church, was filled with the faithful of all classes.

"The secular and regular clergy were represented in large numbers. The members of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer, the former Vicar-General of whose Transalpine branch the Church was about to declare 'Blessed,' occupied a special tribune. On the tribune for the diplomats was seen the Austrian Ambassador to the Holy See, Count Paar, with a Secretary of the Legation; for this was a day of honor for that Catholic country, for Austria, of which the Blessed One was a native son.

"The illuminations were like fairyland; well nigh four thousand candles burned on the arches and chandeliers.

"High above the altar, surrounded by clouds, was visible in an oval aperture a picture covered with a veil and surrounded by a multitude of lights.

"Near the entrance of this hall, to the right and to the left, were two large paintings, one of which represented the miracle that God had wrought on the sick Baroness Agnes Fiath at the intercession of the Blessed One, the other depicting the miraculous cure of the poor Mary Hofmann.

"The hour of ten was at hand. Under the escort of honor of the Swiss Guards, the Cardinals of the Sacred Congregation of Rites with the Prelates and Consultors appeared and took their places.

"Father Pfab, C.SS.R., the Postulator of the Cause, accompanied by the First Secretary, then approached the Prefect of the Sacred Congregation of Rites, Cardinal Bianchi, and begged for the reading of the Decree of Beatification. After this had been read aloud, the *Te Deum* was intoned, the chant being taken up by the choir of the Capella Julia and continued in alternate verses by the myriad-voiced *canto fermo* of the people present.

"It was an inspiring sight, when, as the Ambrosian Hymn of Praise burst forth, high above the altar, the veil dropped and the picture of the Blessed Father Clement Maria Hofbauer, encircled with innumerable lights, appeared in triumph, surrounded by angels, and soaring toward heaven. Every heart beat faster, tears of joy and gratitude filled the eye, while the sun shot a golden stream of light into the hall, and the bells of St. Peter's rang out in festive tones to honor the newly Beatified One.

"After the *Te Deum,* the solemn Pontifical Mass in honor of Blessed Clement was sung, the Right Reverend Bishop of Bruenn, Dr. Francis S. Bauer, being the celebrant.

"In the afternoon, long before three o'clock, the hall was again densely crowded. In the sanctuary, in front, a magnificent prie-dieu had been placed; for the Holy Father was to come to pay his veneration to the Blessed One.

"At a quarter after three, a thrill passed through the crowd, the whispering ceased, and all was quiet. A long line of Prelates of the Church and Cardinals approached. Next appeared the golden helmets of the Noble Guard, and the Vicar of

Christ, Leo XIII, passed through the throng, dispensing his blessing.

"Having reached the sanctuary, His Holiness knelt and remained for a long time in fervent prayer. For at least twelve minutes he buried his face in a white cloth. He prayed, he wept. It was a solemn moment. Deep silence reigned throughout the hall. One could have heard a leaf falling. Only the great clock of St. Peter's, ticking off the time in its short, staccato beats, was audible. It seemed to mark the beats of the Father's heart, leaning now upon the heart of God and begging to be heard through the intercession of the Blessed One.

"After spending almost half an hour in prayer, the Holy Father arose. The venerable General of the Redemptorists, Father Nicholas Mauron, then approached His Holiness, and in feeling language thanked him for all the honors and favors bestowed upon himself and the entire Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer. He next presented the Holy Father with a large bouquet of flowers and the relics of Blessed Clement in a precious, exquisitely-wrought reliquary.

"The Holy Father was visibly moved, and in a few short words he expressed his joy, saying that it was a consolation to him to confer the honors of the Church upon a Blessed One of our own times. He further said that in his opinion God must have great designs in view with regard to the Congregation, since He granted it this mark of distinction. He thanked Father General for his gifts, and in a warm, fatherly way offered him his hand to kiss. Thereupon Leo XIII left the hall, imparting his blessing to the right and to the left as he went."

Not many years after the Beatification the examination of new miracles was undertaken with a view to the Canonization of Blessed Clement, and was successfully concluded in a comparatively short time. On the Feast of the Ascension of Our Lord, May 20, 1909, Pope Pius X conducted the solemn celebration of the Canonization.

The new Saint rapidly became a favorite among the faithful. The appeal of his character and labors, enhanced by the glory of heaven, is constantly gaining for him new friends and

admirers. His memory is revered in all Christian lands. Everywhere altars, chapels, churches, convents, educational and charitable institutions bear his name. His Fatherland, especially, holds him in grateful remembrance. In the month following his Canonization, from June 26 to June 29, quiet little Tasswitz was the scene of an unusual gathering. Between six and eight thousand pilgrims thronged about the small house in which Hofbauer had first seen the light of day and spent his childhood years. During these days the little room in which he was born was converted into a chapel. On September 20, 1910, a memorial tablet of red marble with a portrait of the Saint, recalling his labors at St. Ursula's, was unveiled in the Seiler Place, in Vienna. In July, 1912, a monument was erected in his honor at Mariazell. In the following year the city of Vienna solemly dedicated a new monument to him, a well-wrought bust of the Saint in bronze, on a pedestal of marble, two meters in height, in the eastern apsis of the Church of the Minorites.

On the eve of the great World War, Pope Pius X declared the Saint the Patron of the city of Vienna. Preparations were under way to celebrate this new honor with public ceremonies when the great catastrophe broke upon Europe. The outcome of the war has changed conditions considerably, especially in the old Fatherland of Hofbauer. But precisely at this juncture does he stand out as the Saint adapted to the spirit of the age. The dreadful upheaval of minds in which we are now forced to live and do battle, the effects of which we are constantly made to feel more and more, and the end of which it is impossible to forecast, he personally saw in its beginnings and early development. He heard the onward tread of the new era and suffered terribly on account of it. But his was not the suffering of supineness and inaction. "The powerful swimmer," as Werner styled him in his poem, did all in his power to check the spiritual deluge. Literally, he spent all his energies in the struggle for God, for the Church, and for immortal souls.

A century has passed since the Saint departed this life. We cannot more fittingly close these pages, written in grateful memory of him, than with the powerful words in which Adam

Mueller, in the "Austrian Observer," made known to the public the passing of Hofbauer: "What a single faithful servant of God like this man can accomplish in the midst of the most unfavorable circumstances and the most trying situations, the walls of St. Benno's, in Warsaw, would proclaim, did we not possess thousands of living witnesses, whom he fed, clothed, and led back to God and to a truly Christian life.

"Posterity will reap the fruits of his active and truly apostolic life among us. The great and lowly, the learned and the unlettered, mourn the irreparable loss of their father and guide, and even strangers, who knew him by name only, on hearing of his death, realized that a strong support of Faith and of Religion, and therefore also, of the Fatherland, had passed away. Only the thought that he still lives in the good and rich seed that he has sown, can temper our sorrow over his loss."

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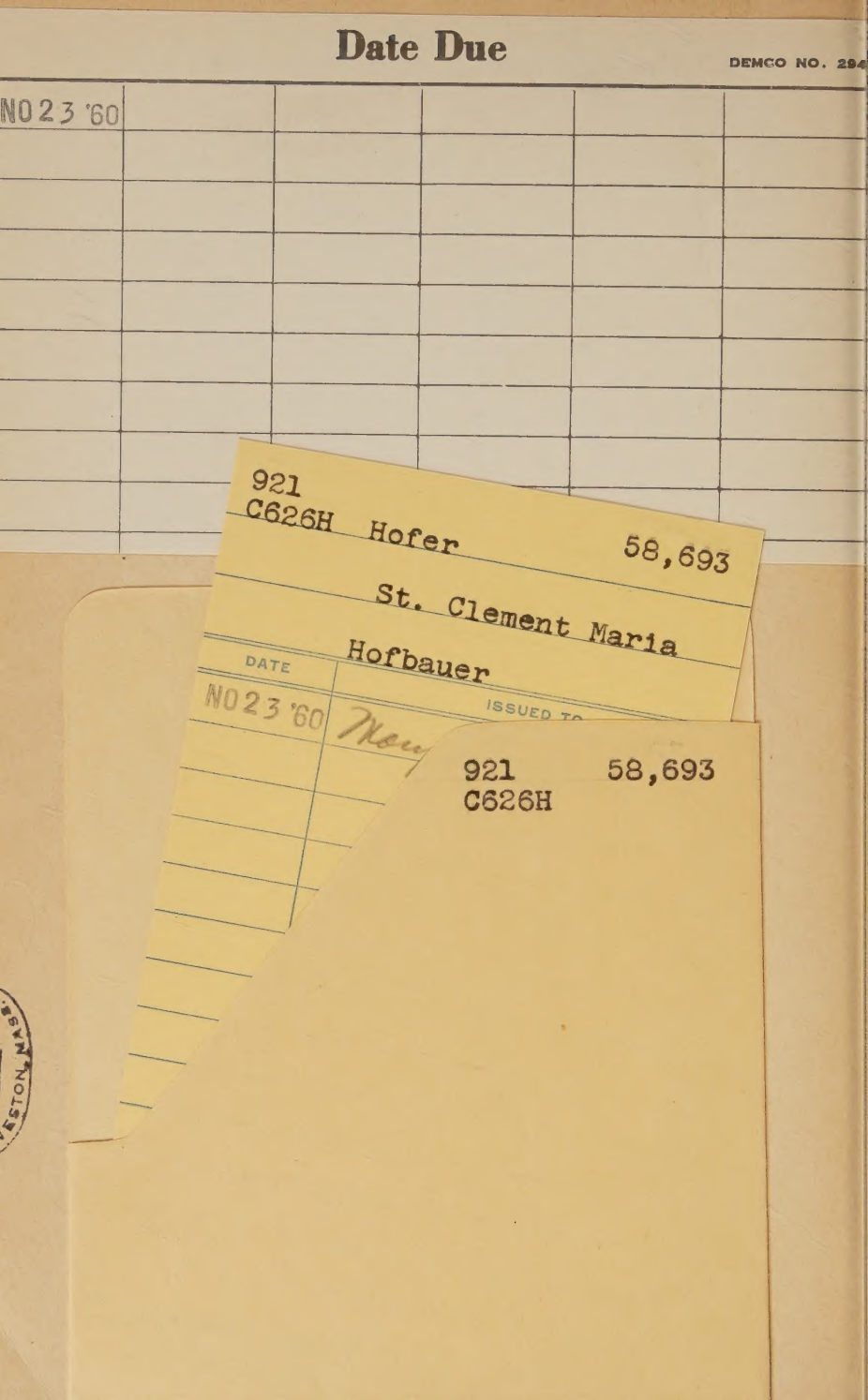
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